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TYLNEY HALL.

VOL. I.

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TYLNEY HALL.

BY THOMAS HOOD.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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DEDICATION.

TO HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE.

MY LORD DUKE,

It has often happened to me in my sea-side rambles to behold the name of some Illustrious Personage gracing a craft of very humble pretensions. Such an inscription, doubtless, exalts the vessel in the eyes of its owner ; for instance, the master of the William the Fourth must feel something of the conscious dignity of a Prime Minister, when he takes the helm in his hand to guide his Sovereign through his watery empire.

Sometimes the name on the stern of the vessel is a memorial of past kindness and condescension on the part of the noble Godfather or Godmother; and then, far as the wind may urge, or the waves compel the little bark, a sentiment of respect, gratitude, and attachment goes along with it. In perpetuating these feelings, a fishing-boat may become a pleasure-boat to its proprietor.

SLOANE
MAR 21 1952

In this spirit I prefix Your Grace's name to this Work, the first I launch of its kind; and whether it be fated to live at sea, or to rot on shore, it will bear witness that I have the honour to be,

My Lord Duke,

Your Grace's

Much obliged and devoted Servant,

THOMAS HOOD.

Lake House, Wanstead,
October 20th, 1834.

INTRODUCTION.

I WAS sitting snugly in my sanctorum, with the remains of a bottle of port wine before me, wherewith, according to custom, I had dismissed a new work from the stocks, when, after a preliminary tap at the door, two strangers presented themselves, and with much bowing and many invitations were induced to take chairs on either side of the table. I saw them individually glance at the shallow pool of purple that occupied the bottom of the decanter; and, with my usual sense of the duties of hospitality, before they had done hemming and clearing their throats preparatory to declaring the purport of their visit, a fresh magnum was glowing through the crystal. Whilst they were enjoying and commending the raciness of a celebrated vintage, I took the opportunity of scrutinizing my guests; and certainly no two human beings could present more essential differences both in face and figure. One was tall

and thin, with a preposterously long body and a lugubrious pale face; whereas the other was short and punchy, with a round, shining, chubby, ruddy countenance, that did not seem to have kept pace with his age, but had remained a boy's head on a man's shoulders. He spoke smartly, with a brisk, merry voice, occasionally breaking into a joyous chuckle, without any apparent cause but the mere exuberance of animal spirits. His companion, on the contrary, had a slow, deep, melancholy drawl with a touch of the conventicle twang in it, and he indulged in periodical suspirations as regularly recurring as the pattern of an area-railing, ten breathings and then a sigh, ten more and another sigh, and so on. I could hardly help comparing myself, with all due modesty as to talents, to Garrick between Tragedy and Comedy, in the celebrated picture by Sir Joshua Reynolds. One peculiarity forcibly struck my notice; at every sip of his wine the little fellow's eyes brightened and twinkled with greater glee, till every instant I expected he would break out into some lusty carol; whilst the other took great gulps, and at every draught became more dull and dismal; as if he had been

swallowing so much ditch-water. Every inch of his face seemed to take an ell, and his voice became proportionately doleful, till at last it fairly tolled like a passing-bell. Both seemed to feel some awkwardness at broaching the subject of their visit; and, after sundry significant nods and winks had been bandied to and fro between them, I made bold to enquire their names, and to what circumstance I was indebted for the honour of their company.

"My friend, Mr. Maurice," said the little man, "is the reader at Messrs. Stukeley's printing-office."

"And my friend, Mr. Collis," said the tall man, "is the reader at Messrs. Burnett's."

"As such, Sir," said the Grig, with a grin, "it was my pleasant duty to read, revise, and correct the proof sheets of the first two volumes of your mirth-provoking novel,—O lord!"—and throwing himself back in his chair, he laughed till the tears ran down his cheeks, as if at the remembrance of some very funny passage.

"And in a similar capacity," said the Grave

Maurice, " I had the pleasure (a sigh) of reading the third volume, and, without flattery, I enjoyed it as much as ever I did any thing in my life."

The doleful look that accompanied this assurance, rendered the compliment rather equivocal; however I bowed right and left, preserving my gravity as well as I could, which was a little disconcerted by the extreme contrast of the two personages that alternately saluted me. The only point they had in common was a relish for the wine: they evidently thought it good, and kept pulling proofs of it with the perseverance of pressmen; but the long face only grew still gloomier, whilst the short one, in quirks and cranks and waggish workings, began to emulate that of Tim Bobbin. He was pleased to inform me, with a physiognomy which could only have been appropriately framed in a horse-collar, " that he had once read a serious poem of mine with great gratification, and he must regret I now did so little in that line "; which drew from the sad one a dreary sentence in favour of a certain " jocose effusion," coupled with a sort of lament that I now drew as

little from my jocular vein as my jugular. Of course I bowed again, albeit not a little surprised at such objections; and, after another glass of wine, we came to business. I was given to understand that, according to the general custom of printing-offices, my present work had undergone, not a retrospective review, but a prospective one, before the sheets were gathered for the binder, and Messrs. Maurice and Collis were the organs of their respective fraternities, charged to convey to me the strictures which the precocious critics of their several coteries had thought proper to pass upon my novel. Accustomed as I had been, when Editor of a Magazine, to receive and listen to comments from such quarters on the articles of my contributors, I felt less surprise than another author might have done at such an intimation, and, like Sir Fretful Plagiary, I expressed my perfect readiness to listen to their candid opinions. Of course I expected to find a sharp flavour in some of their remarks; even as Dr. Kitchiner, in a recipe for punch, now before me, actually recommends as the best acid, a due proportion of "critic," a word he doubtlessly considered equi-

valent to citric, or quintessence of lemon: so I summoned up my philosophy accordingly.

The Momus began; and I confess, to my astonishment, his main objection to my novel insinuated a dearth of the pathetic. "Not," he said, "but there is abundance of bloodshed and shedding of tears: if I recollect rightly, the second volume alone contains a divorce, arson, burglary, and suicide. But what of that? Excuse me, Sir, for saying so, but we know your tricks. We are not such fools as to snivel when all the while you are grinning at us in your sleeve."

"Well, you amaze me, Sir," said I, involuntarily lifting up my hands; "it was my own impression that, on the whole, my novel was too sombre."

"Excuse me," answered the Droll, "you were never more mistaken. There are things that might be pathetic from other pens—but we know you of old. Even your horrors don't take us in, —show us a clot of coagulated blood, and we tip one another the wink, and say 'currant-jelly.' For instance, there is the murder of Belmour, Higgs tittered all the time he was setting it up;

and, for my own part, when the proof came before me at dinner-time, I confess I fairly choked in my pint of stout."

"And I wish you had!" I exclaimed, testily, nettled beyond patience at such a reception of my pet catastrophe. "But that's the way with your would-be critics: they are as absurd, as Dr. Johnson in his definition of wit. It traces resemblances, says he, and judgment detects differences; as if, forsooth, the same faculty that perceived the likeness of a man to a monkey, did not involve the ability of distinguishing a horse from a hog. So, if a man be alive to the ludicrous, by your lop-sided theory he can have no sympathy with the pathetic: because he is sometimes in jest, you will never allow him to be serious. I do verily believe, if I were to publish the elegy I wrote on my youngest boy, who was taken from me by scarlet fever last June, you would be hunting for jokes in the lamentation of a bereaved father and looking for puns in it."

"To be sure, Sir," answered the Risible with a broad grin. "I correct the Comic. But to return to the novel.—There's the interview of Leonora

with her lover, after taking the veil; I thought it the funniest thing I had ever read! I did, Sir, upon my life. But I didn't stand alone, the whole office roared at it—roared, Sir,"—and the villain gave me a fresh sample of his own powers by "laughing consumedly."

"I assure you, Sir," said the Lugubrious, hastening to interpose, "we think very differently at Messrs. Stukeley's. To our tastes, and to my own especially, your three volumes are too exclusively gloomy and depressing. The compositors compared it to newspaper work; nothing but Shocking Accidents, Afflicting Events, and Lamentable Occurrences. It wants relief—an occasional humourous sketch; if there were but a single chapter that one could smile over—but it is all wretched and miserable from title to finis."

I was going to reply, but the Democritus forestalled me. "Ha! ha! ha! ha! ho! ho! ho!" he shouted; "Maurice, my boy, you should have read the parting of Isabella and Theodore, when he was banished!" and again his "lungs crowed like chanticleer."

Was there ever such a provoking scoundrel? I

longed to make him laugh on the wrong side of his mouth; but I subdued the rising passion, and addressed him with what I considered to be coolness. "Tastes differ," I said, "and I cannot answer for the vagaries it may choose to take with certain individuals. For instance, Sir," (and I gave him a nod, as much as to say you may take it to yourself,) "Nero fiddled whilst Rome was burning; and there may be mental palates so depraved as to find a mirthful relish even in the heart-rending of a poor female, divorced for ever from the object of her affections. As for the incident that made you so merry, Sir, I can only say, that my own family, and they ought to know me best, so little suspected me of any underhand mockery, that they bestowed their own tears on the misery of Isabella. I will not swear that I did not turn a little womanish myself at hearing the chapter in question impressively read aloud by the touching voice of my wife."

"And Pluto as *I* am in general," said the Heraclitus with a pavior's sigh, "I will not deny that it drew iron tears down my cheek, when my wife in the same manner read aloud the disasters of

the poor unfortunate Pedrillo, and his terror when detained by the banditti."

"What, cry at that!" ejaculated the Laugher, and he burst into a fresh peal, which for the first time I forgave him, as the distresses of Pedrillo were intended to be of a ludicrous character; but I quickly revoked my pardon, when the fellow added, "that it was as comical as any thing in the book, the death-bed of Gaspar always excepted."

"Ay, now you are joking, Collis," said the Sepulchral, "the exit of the robber is undeniably horrible, and so is the poisoning of Sancho—beyond any thing in the range of fiction."

I stared alternately at the speakers, for the said poisoning was merely imaginary, like that of Justice Frogmore in Humphrey Clinker. I could hardly persuade myself but that the pair of Readers had planted themselves upon me to enjoy a concerted jest at my expense, except that it would have been an offensive liberty of the first magnitude. However I resolved to turn the tables, and as they had given me some annoyance I determined to retaliate. I was meditating on the means, when after an important hem, with a tone pecu-

liarly solemn, the Grave Maurice brought forward an objection, to which he gave all the weight he could by the specific gravity of his countenance.

"It is an ungrateful office," he said, "but as the representative of a class distinguished as the decidedly serious, I am called upon to notice with reprehension the great freedoms you take with a body of men, who might be called in justice, as they are in derision, the Saints. It has the censure of the whole office,—yes, Sir, down to the very devils."

The ludicrous association conveyed by the last part of the sentence made me join in an involuntary chorus, with the Jovial; but my constitutional antipathy to cant and canters soon roused my spleen, and left no more hilarity in my laugh than in a hyæna's. "If you mean the picture of Brother Pius," said I, "it is but a rough sketch, a mere outline, to the finished coloured portrait I mean some day to draw of a hypocritical, canting, trading, time-serving knave,—one who makes his Ledger his Bible, and the latter his Waste-book; a lying, cogging, Mawworm, that will commit strictly pious frauds, and cheat to a decidedly serious

amount. I know the breed well; they are vile birds of prey, not mounting upwards like the sweet lark to carol at heaven's gate, but that they may make a stoop the better upon earth and its carrion."

The dismal one turned up his eyes till I saw nothing but the whites—an action which produced a fresh burst of merriment from his opposite neighbour, but it was a sound of which I began to get weary, and I resolved if possible to rid myself of my guests. I drew myself up stiffly before I spoke.

" After all gentlemen, is there not something in this of the Souter out of Selkirk, or the cobbler beyond his last? To my humble apprehension your province is to correct the press not the Author; and I am compelled to say, that the numerous mistakes and literal errors that have been allowed to pass in my work, hint a laxity in your peculiar duties, which is not to be atoned for by your interference with matters for which you are not responsible. For instance, I wrote in Scotch, 'the wale' of the country, which looked, I suppose, so 'very like a whale' to you, that you turned it into weal. Do you suppose that Auld

Rob Morris, 'the wale of auld men,' was a great lubberly Leviathan, living in a valley, with oxen and sheep of his own?"

"Very good, Sir, very good," said the Momus, as soon as he could articulate for laughing. "But authors may thank their own crabbed scrawls for the errors. Your own, for instance. Higgs kept samples of it, and has bound them up like a book of autographs, and certainly the collection presents as much variety as if all writers since Cadmus had lent a hand to it. Sometimes it is a little close niggle, as if you studied economy in stationery; at other times we receive bouncing round text, as if you were amanuensis to Gog and Magog. To-day the lines go as straight and steadily as if you were writing a prize essay for the Temperance Society; to-morrow they go reeling up and down, as if your pen had dipped into a brandy bottle by mistake for the inkstand. Occasionally, when you are lazy, you favour us with abbreviations, and we have to study a new system of short-hand; and now and then you teaze us with a set of mere hieroglyphics, that persuade us you have been writing in your sleep.

In short we know all your moods, Sir,—when you are drowsy, and when you are lazy, when you are half drunk or whole drunk; when you are dissatisfied, and when you are up in your stirrups, and don't think small beer of yourself—that's when your d's and g's and y's flourish their tails. We know all your weathers, Sir, and keep them regularly recorded, day after day, like a meteorological register."

"The deuce you do!" I exclaimed. "Then Messrs. Burnett's have no more of my printing, that's all,"—but as I started up to ring the bell, in order that the intruding gentlemen might be shown out, I found myself broad awake, and alone, in my sanctorum, with the relic of port wine still unconsumed before me. I had been merely dreaming: but the perversity of the two visionary Readers haunted me long afterwards, and even at this moment I have some misgivings, whether the following pages may not be fated to meet with some real Collises and Maurices in the world, who will not peruse,

"In the same spirit that the Author writ."

TYLNEY HALL.

CHAPTER I.

"An old cloak makes a new jerkin; a withered serving-man a fresh tapster."

MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR.

ON the skirts of the extensive forest of H—— there stood, perhaps still stands, a little inn or house of entertainment, which by its sequestered situation seemed destined for the occupation of that anomalous character, a publican of retired habits. Its locality, indeed, promised little more custom than the site of that celebrated tavern on Muckslush Heath, in Colman's comedy. On one side the eye wandered over a wide barren level,

clothed and variegated only by grass dwindled into moss, and trees stunted into shrubs; this bleak waste was known by the significant name of the Flats. On the other side stretched an immense park, behind an angle of which lay perdue a small village, the main prop and stay of Heady and Co.'s entire, as retailed from the tap of this sequestered Diamond of the Desert. Over a side door, leading to a diminutive yard, appeared a notification of good entertainment for man and horse, with a hint of a neat post chaise, whose post was almost a sinecure; for though Jonas kept a pair of horses for hire, they were seldom let out, except to grass. By way of sign, three Chinese pigs with long ears would have puzzled a zoologist, but for the superscription of "the Rabbits;" while a writing underneath informed the reader that there was an ordinary every day at one, although historically such a circumstance was extraordinary; and an addendum expressed, that this establishment was kept by—for it did not keep—one Jonas Hanway, late coachman to Sir Theodore Bowles. Honest Jonas had lived so steadily and soberly all his life,

that he could afford to take up the trade of making others unsteady and unsober; however, in obedience to his natural bent, he took the most retired public house he could find; and instead of "a fine stroke of business in a desirable low hard-drinking neighbourhood," according to advertisement, was the proprietor of the snug genteel concern of the Rabbits, doing no butts a week. The title of the house was derived from the neighbouring warrens, and might have induced a belief that it numbered a few poachers among its customers; but the house, on the contrary, was a well-ordered one, at which even the modern Temperance Societies might have held their anniversaries. Its chief visitors, indeed, were a set of village tradesmen, who spent their one sixpence or one shilling per night with a punctual regularity, most of them being members of a threepenny whist club, which held its sittings three times a week. By help of this, and a very little chance custom, Jonas contrived to keep in good credit with his brewer and distiller, and to carry on a concern, which, though it yearly swallowed up his small annuity in the funds, was so much to

his liking, that he would not have taken a hundred pounds for the goodwill. Bred up from boyhood in a sedate, early-rising, church-going family, he made a point of emptying his tap-room—when it was not empty of its own accord—at the hour of eleven; and on Sundays he was rigid in shutting up divinely; by which phrase he meant that he closed his doors during divine service. In short, he drove his house as discreetly, as soberly, and as steadily, as he had done the old family vehicle with Sir Theodore Bowles and the gout in its inside. His chief delight was in reading the newspaper, and especially the parliamentary debates; though, till the hour of his death, his parlour guests could never decide whether he was Whig or Tory, but each secretly believed that Jonas inclined to his own particular side. This seeming impartiality procured him the honourable situation of umpire to the whist club, till, having given contrary opinions on every point of the game, the players at last preferred to refer their disputed cases to the summary arbitration of "heads or tails," for at that time there was no Dispatch or Bell's Life in London, to inform correspondents,

" whether if A. held the ace of hearts, B. was entitled to play the deuce of diamonds to C.'s nine of spades, which had fallen to D.'s ten of clubs,—A. being a married man and the rest all bachelors."

So much for Jonas. Fortune seemed to have cast his lot amiss; as the world goes he made but a sorry sort of publican, but he would have made an excellent parish clerk. Mrs. Hanway, on the contrary, as an Irishman would say, seemed born a landlady, and the very worst of her faults, when tried at the bar, appeared of advantage to her character. Technically speaking, her temper was a little *pricked*, but its tartness proved of essential service to a mistress who had commonly to control a termagant cook and an obstreperous pot-boy. Besides, the temper of her husband, which was really drawn a little too mild, acted admirably as a counterpoise, or, as he used to express it himself, they made excellent " half and half." Her other failing, for she had but a pair, " leaned to virtue's side," and may be mentioned without malice. In her single days she had lived in the now almost obsolete situation of still-room woman

to Lady Bowles, from whom she had imbibed a benevolent curiosity into the ailments of the poor, with an invincible desire to exhibit, as the faculty call it, her drugs and simples. In her zeal, however, to administer to all the "ills that flesh is heir to," she scarcely paid due respect to the proverb of "let *well* alone," but seemed to think, with certain politicians, that constitutions are good for nothing but to be mended. No soup-committee ever distributed their decoctions to the poor with more liberality than Mrs. Hanway: her still was literally never still, but day and night dripped teas and tinctures from herbs and drugs, whose virtues were estimated in exact proportion to their nauseousness. Some few patients she had, who took her prescriptions for love, and the impatients she conciliated by a presentation glass of Geneva. Many were the hale invalids, and the Temperance Society may publish the fact to their discredit, who consented to take her doses for the sake of her drams. Unfortunately her medical practice, though it brought customers to the bar, was the cause of banishing one or two who could be ill spared from the tap-room

and parlour. Even thus, for instance, was the Rabbits deprived of the steady Saturday patronage of master Gregory the head constable, through a few drops of something very wholesome, which she had volunteered into his periodical glass of grog. The zealous functionary in the discharge of his duty on a certain night, had, by great vigilance, succeeded in catching a cold instead of apprehending a sheepstealer, and an awful wheeziness was the consequence; but let a constable be ever so wheezy, he may reasonably object to such a constable's miscellany as rum and water and squills.

CHAPTER II.

"Of such it may be said, that they do not play at cards, but only play at playing at them."

MRS. BATTLE'S OPINIONS OF WHIST.

IN the weather column of Moore's Almanac for the year of our Lord 17—, and exactly opposite to the date of Friday the 19th of November, a state of atmosphere was predicted unusually genial and serene. Accordingly, on the morning of the 19th, the wind began to blow with a violence unparalleled for half a century, accompanied by occasional showers of hailstones, of a magnitude so unexampled, that several natural philosophers took the pains of measuring and publishing their dimensions. As the gale set in from the south-west, the Rabbits had the full benefit of its force, the air not being at all composed in those Flats

which lay in front of that desolate house of call. On the evening of that day, the same five faces were in the parlour as if they had never left it since the preceding club-night; and the usual members of the lower house were vehemently puffing in self-defence against a chimney which asserted the same privilege of smoking in a common tap-room. Mrs. Hanway was in her bar, inwardly lamenting that she could prescribe no home-made soothing syrup for nature in convulsions; while Jonas wandered from room to room, listening to one of the signs of the times taking its full swing of the tempest, till the emblematical rabbits seemed to squeal as shrilly as pigs in a high wind. Exactly as the clock struck eight, Mr. Tablet, the president of the whist-club, proposed to make a rubber: he was a grey-headed, weather-beaten man, with short legs and a tall body, which, in speaking, he swayed backwards and forwards with a mechanical motion, which hinted that though now a master mason, he had formerly sat in a sentry-box and played at see-saw with a block of marble. Catching up the solitary pack of cards,

and giving them a clumsy shuffle, and looking round the room, he addressed the members of his board of green cloth with—

" Gentlemen, is any of you agreeable ?"

" For my parts, as nobody else speaks," said a fat man with a thin voice, " I've no objections in life to take a hand, provided I'm wanted to make a fourth."

" That's two, then," said Tablet, " for in course, as president, I sets the first rubber a-going. How say you, Mr. Hands ?"

" Why you know," said Mr. Hands, " I seldom or never play, as ever since my fit I've impaired my memory, and am apt to revoke."

Mr. Benson and Mr. Walden were severally appealed to, as the forlorn hope of the rubber, when Mr. Benson " was perfectly agreeable to anything, and to any pints they liked," as was also Mr. Walden, the last man of the pack—but on the impracticable condition, that they should be excused cutting in till after the first two rubbers or so had been played out.

" Such being the case," said the president, " I

have nothing left for me to say, except *hic jacet ;*" and with these professional words, he deposited the pack like a miniature monument on the green baize.

After the foregoing ceremony, which, by the way, occurred with little variation of request or apology three times per week, this ghost of a whist-club subsided into a mere Wordsworthian " party in a parlour ;" till at length a member volunteered a song, if such a phrase may be applied to a song which had served in the line for several years past. Those who have seen a small thread of table beer, with a natural shake of its own, issuing out of a nine-gallon cask, may form an idea of the slender warble that transpired from the fat man with a thin voice, in honour of the " Maid of the Walley." Strange to say, weak as it was, it was vehemently encored, as if the auditors acted on the principle of the good man in the Scottish song,

> " Syne if her typpenny chance to be sma'
> We'll tak a good scour o't and ca't awa."

But the dwellers in cities accustomed to Maga-

zins de Nouveautés, and Theâtres de Variétés, have little conception of the monotonous routine in which provincial regulars and orderlies find, not merely content, but enjoyment.

The da capo had just reached the second line of the second verse, when the air without, proving stronger than the air within, burst open the dilapidated casement, and a gust of wind came in, which blew out the singer's voice like a rushlight. Immediately, by favour of the opening, they distinguished a voice calling lustily for help; in a few seconds a summons was repeated at the front door, which was speedily opened, and a stranger entered who seemed to be on such bad terms with the lights, that they all went out as he came in, and it was not till he had made his way to the fire in the tap-room, that his features could be recognised.

"As I live by bread," ejaculated the landlord, "its unlucky Joe."

Joseph Spiller, the unfortunate postillion thus referred to, was a living example of that cross-grained fate, which attends upon certain devoted individuals through life. Born under an evil star,

probably a falling one, he had been oftener thrown from the saddle, or pitched from the bar, than any postboy of his standing, or rather sitting. He was literally a marked man in a stricter sense than the term generally implies, for the bridge of his nose was broken, he had lost one eye, with the whole of his front teeth, and had a limp in his left leg—personal deodands levied against him from mishaps purely accidental. He had been a careful driver, and a sober, but sometimes the commissioners of roads left stumbling blocks in his path, sometimes he was the victim of inexperienced or inebriated charioteers who drove against him; and above all he had the luck of being associated with more stumblers, kickers, shyers, and other four-legged vices, than any boy of his school. He had had as many horses killed under him as Prince Eugene, and more runaways than the driver of the last stage to Gretna-green. Rendered superstitious at last, by such a succession of mishaps, poor Joe had become something of a fatalist; he gave up inspecting the harness, or looking at the linchpins, and was never particularly ready to pull up his horse's head in

case of a stumble. "It was all one," he said, "as to how a horse was held in hand if he was rid by a hunfortunate fellow that was borned on a Friday." Want of care thus coalescing with want of luck, an increased number of casualties obtained for Joe the unenviable name of "unlucky," by which Hanway described him.

"In the name of mercy,—Joe," said the host, taking an upset for granted, "in the name of mercy, Joe, who's hurt?"

"He's as dead as a stubnail by this time," whimpered Joe.

"Heaven forbid," said the landlord; "but there's no time to be lost."

"Such being the case we must have a shutter—there's one blown off the hinges in the club-room," suggested the president of the packmen.

"Lord love you," said Joe, "he don't want no shutter—the knacker's drag is all he requires now, poor thing."

"Thank goodness, it's a horse, then," said Mrs. Hanway, "and not a human being."

"To be sure it is," answered Joe, "but that's

like my luck; never a one else but me would have had a job across the Flats, and on such a night; some can't go wrong if they would, and with broad day-light to help 'em, but for my part I can go off the road in the dark."

"But the horse?" inquired Jonas.

"Choked with his collar long afore I could dextricate t'other, and with nobody inside by way of helps, only a very young youth and an old one, and him a scraping his shoes at death's door, and as yellow as my silk jacket; but that's my luck."

"Well, there's a Providence, even in posting," exclaimed Mrs. Hanway, casting a side glance at her jalaps and cordials. "Poor gentleman, a liver complaint, no doubt; but a strong cup of camomile tea of a morning."—

"A stiff glass of summut over night is more like to do him good," answered Joe, with a mechanical movement towards the bar.

"And the poor dear child?" inquired the considerate Mrs. Hanway, filling out a glass of pennyroyal, which the postillion bolted without hesitation.

"I thought," said he, making a face, "that it was a go of thunder and lightning; but that's my luck."

At this juncture honest Jonas returned from the stable-yard, and inquired as to the locality of the travellers, who, in the mean-time, by virtue of a temporary residence, were enjoying the right of common.

"About a quarter of a mile off, more or less," answered Joe; "but there's no needs of hurry—I'll warrant the horse they've got with 'em for a quiet un, cause why he's dead, and the windows is all up and only one broke—they can't be more comfortable considering, whether I takes a little drop of summut or not;" so saying, the postillion, like a new member of Parliament, took his place with an oath, and couldn't be persuaded to vacate his seat till he had accepted something equivalent to the Chiltern Hundreds. His appetite and thirst satisfied, he set forth, accompanied by boots, ostler, and potboy, though in all but a pair, for the last three offices were monopolised by one individual; they took with them a spare horse, and a bottle of

something against the night air, from Mrs. Hanway, for the especial use of the invalid, and which, be it said, went undiminished by a single drop to its destination.

By this time the wind had become somewhat "blown and scant of breath," only "roaring as gently as a sucking dove;" but although time's whole eleven upon the clock had been bowled out, each several member of the whist club seemed inclined to act as a long stop; a departure from their established rule which could only be justified by the expectation of post-chaise travellers at the Rabbits. They were longer than ever they were before in discussing their second tumblers, and several, encouraged by the example of the president himself, went even so far as to call for a glass beyond their ordinary stint; the third tumbler despatched, they were slower than ever had been known in the appropriation of their peculiar great-coats and hats, and far more careful than common in the adjustment of capes, collars, and silk-handkerchiefs. Armed at last at all points against weather, they were even then a thousand times

more particular than they had ever been in their inquiries as to the state of the night; and sundry deputations made a brief excursion into the open air, for the ostensible purpose of verifying the meteorological reports which they had received. In short they temporised as adroitly as diplomatists of a higher grade, for the attainment of an unavowed object. Fortune, however, which had denied them a game at long whist, afforded them, by way of amends, a protracted game of patience; for whether Joe had understated the distance, or had met with unforeseen obstacles, it was a full hour before his wheels rattled up to Jonas's Rabbit Hutch. In the meantime Mrs. Hanway had made the most precautionary preparations for the reception of guests who she understood had come from a hot climate into a cold one. Accordingly, as soon as the young gentleman alighted, he was caught up in a warm blanket and carried kicking up stairs by the sturdy Jonas; the next comer, before he left the steps of the chaise, had a conservative handkerchief clapped up to his face by the considerate Mrs. Hanway; and as she thought proper

to get him out of the damp air of the passage as quickly as possible, the gazers who lined the door of the club-room in expectation of seeing the stranger, caught only a momentary glimpse of a travelling cap, a bandana, and a blue cloak—followed by a treacle posset and a warming pan.

"Well," said the manufacturer of tombstones, as the effigy glided up stairs, "that's what I call 'sic transit;'" and with this remark he caught up his hat and sallied forth homewards with his neighbours of the village.

CHAPTER III.

"You cannot hunt to-day, to-day,
You cannot hunt to-day!—
But a hunting we will go!

THOMAS ROUNDING.

IN the list of hunting appointments, as given in the County Chronicle, the meeting of the H—— Hounds for Saturday, the 20th of November, was advertised to take place at Windmill Grange, a fixture which brought the pack into the vicinity of Hanway's public house. The morning was beautiful for hunting, that is to say, what some people would have called rather muggy, with very little wind from the south, and a cloudy sky. Owing to this auspicious weather the field was more numerous than usual; and the sportsmen welcomed with peculiar pleasure the first appearance for the season

of their old friend and leader Sir Mark Tyrrel, of Tylney Hall, the master of the hunt. During the last two months a martyr to the gout, though he would rather have been one of Fox's Martyrs, he had never mounted a horse. The woeful case of Witherington in Chevy Chase was light compared with the Baronet's, who had thus four legs taken from under him, for, in reality, he was a modern Centaur. He did not, however, make as manful a flight as the bold Esquire in the ballad—like the ancient knights, he felt quite helpless when unhorsed, and, after a feeble struggle, surrendered himself quietly into the hands of Dr. Bellamy, the family physician. The Doctor, a formalist of the old school, was, like Ollapod, a great advocate for spring physic, and having vainly tried for some years past to persuade Sir Mark to go through a course of May medicine, seized with avidity on an opportunity for making him swallow the whole arrears in November. Accordingly he drenched his patient so vigorously, that the latter began sometimes to doubt whether he had not better have called in the professional assistance of Master

Burton, a practitioner whose prescriptions were administered by help of a pitchfork and a cow's horn. It is impossible to say how far he might have been eventually reduced, if he had not washed down every lowering draught with a large bumper of Madeira, in furtherance of which, his housekeeper, who was no friend to Sangrado, caused his gruel to become caudle, and his broth to be as like soup as possible:—the best way, she said, to keep the gout from flying to his stomach, was by filling it with something else. By a similar freedom his barley-water was rendered into Burton ale, and his composing draught into a bishop. At last, on a Saturday morning, when the Doctor called with a design of allowing a little air and gentle exercise in a garden chair, he was informed that his patient had suffered a relapse into health, and had gone off suddenly on Bedlamite, to meet the hounds at Windmill Grange.

The appearance of the Baronet at the rendezvous in buckskins and scarlet, and mounted on his famous grey horse, was hailed with more than one involuntary view halloo, notwithstanding such a

sound was in the highest degree unseasonable, considering the time and place. The hounds had been already thrown into cover, and were drawing with admirable steadiness, and the silence of death, when the ill-timed welcome drew them all off, huntsman, whippers-in, and company, to the sound,—to the infinite chagrin of all parties, brute or human; however, the pack was speedily at work again in the underwood, amongst which fifty vigorous tails were busily ranging, when another, and still more unsportsmanlike shouting from the opposite side of the wood, drew the whole cavalry like a trumpet-call in that direction. In a moment the horsemen gained the spot from which the sound proceeded, and discovered a postboy on a tall, rawboned, piebald mare, who was floundering and struggling her way through a patch of gorse. The rider, who never ceased his outcry, was immediately encircled by a score of horsemen, all opening upon him with the same question, of where he had seen the fox.

"An't please your honours," said the postboy, with a respectful touch of his hat, "it's anything

but varmint I have in my head at this present——" words which were barely pronounced when the astonished utterer found himself in the middle of a storm of whipthongs, that assailed him like a foul wind from all quarters at once. Luckily for Unlucky Joe, for it was no other than that butt of misfortune, he was mounted on a mare which had the vice of kicking in no ordinary degree, and, as some of the cuts designed for the rider fell upon the beast's crupper, she resented them in kind, by wheeling round and lashing out so vigorously, as greatly to enlarge the circle of her acquaintance. Favoured by this respite, Joe made shift to explain that he was charged with what he called a life and death letter to Sir Mark, at the same time holding up the missive as conspicuously as he could, and making a movement with his horse towards that personage, who stood a little aloof. The Baronet, however, who had heard the life and death character of the note, conceived at once that the messenger had come post from Dr. Bellamy, with a professional remonstrance against over exertion and fatigue, and a special prescription of home, absti-

nence, and fleecy hosiery. Affecting, therefore, to be unconscious of his claim to the epistle, he set off in a walk towards the copse, with a well-feigned intentness on the movements of Jowler and Grasper, who were visible at the skirt of the cover. Hearing, however, the clatter of the post-horse behind him, he put Bedlamite into a trot, Joe at the same moment pricking his mare into a gallop; whereupon the wily fox-hunter, as if meaning merely to give the mettle of his steed a fillip, clapped spurs to his sides, and placed what he thought an impracticable hedge between himself and his pursuer. The postboy, however, was not to be denied, for a guinea had been paid him beforehand for the service, and "money," says the proverb, "makes the mare to go;" but, doubly urged by gold and steel, she could not, any more than Joe, refuse the fence: they charged it together gallantly, and the result was what the post-office would call "a general delivery" of himself, mare, letter, and all, at the feet of Bedlamite. The sportsmanlike spirit of Sir Mark was not proof against the thorough-going character of this feat.

He immediately dismounted, picked up the letter, and broke the cover—the fox the next minute doing the same thing. A halloo, a burst of canine music, and a crash of timber instantly followed, but, instead of riding at the head of the field, the master of the hunt, to the utter surprise of the whole company, was seen going his best pace in the opposite direction. "By goles, Sir Mark is making a queer cast of his own," exclaimed a farmer, the only pedestrian on the ground; "it were no runaway, for I seed un spur. I say, fellow," he continued, addressing Joe, who was busily groping about in a little hunt of his own amongst the furze —"there must ha' been a terrible strong drag 'tother way, to draw a master of hounds off from his fox when he were just found."

"You don't see nothing hereabouts as didn't grow here, do you?" inquired Joe, by way of answer to the farmer.

"What may it be like, mun?" inquired the agriculturist in his turn.

"It was as like a goold guinea as ever you see in life," answered Joe, "afore it flew out o' my

jacket pocket; it's gone like conjuring! I wish I had never been paid aforehand, but that's my luck."

With this doleful reflection on fortune, her unhappy victim, bruised in body and spirit, took the bridle of the piebald mare, who, with streaming knees, limped after him at a snail's pace to elucidate the meaning of "jump-short"* to her proprietor, Master Jonas Hanway.

In the meantime, Sir Mark, with the recklessness of a neck-or-nothing rider at a steeple-chase, galloped as the crow flies directly across the Flats; and, clearing everything in his way, flung himself off Bedlamite at the door of the Rabbits. The considerate Mrs. Hanway, with the overflowing care-

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* As some provincial dramatist may hereafter use this term, to the great perplexity of commentators, it may be as well to say that the author once heard the commodity enquired for in the shop of a butcher at Upwell, in Norfolk, a vicinity abounding in fens, intersected by broad ditches or drains, occasionally fatal to the sheep who attempt to spring over them. The drowned mutton, under the name of "*jump-short*," at a reduced price, was in request amongst the poor.

fulness which belonged to her character, had tied a muffler of leather over the knocker of a door which professionally stood ever open; and Pots, under the same direction, had scattered two trusses of straw over a road where wheels were almost as great a rarity as they are now-a-days in state lotteries. The Dutch clock in the tap-room no longer struck the hour, and the parlour bell rang only with the benumbed sound of a wine-glass when it is filled with liquid. The sign which had been so given to Æolian discord was taken down, and Jonas himself, at the desire of his spouse, had discarded his iron-shod high-lows, and minced awkwardly about in a pair of list slippers. As for Mrs. Hanway herself, she was quite in her element, invested with all the importance and mystery of an attendant on a sick chamber. Her face wore an unusual expression of grave anxiety, varied however, occasionally, by a slight crumpling up of her features, which died away again with the flavour of the various medicines, which she amused herself by sipping and tasting, preparatory to inflicting them on her patient. Strange to say, the tenderest of

nurses seem to derive some peculiar gratification from the administration of physic. With wonderful gusto they shake up the nauseous sediment full before the eyes of the loathing expectant. With a very unnecessary noise and splash they pour the gurgling abomination, close under the olfactories, into the wine-glass or tea-cup, as if jalap, like porter, would be more acceptable with a fine head, and then gaze on the writhing features and rising gorge with a complacency perfectly unaccountable, except on that principle of Lucretius, that it is pleasant to stand by and look on an infliction which does not reach ourselves.

Mrs. Hanway, at the expense of her invalid, had revelled for some time in this nursing propensity, till human patience, revolting at last, refused peremptorily to honour her draughts; and in consequence she was compelled to find vent for her ruling passion amongst knockers, bells, and thick shoes, as already described. Above all she watched for a noise as vigilantly as a cat for a mouse, and whenever the most insignificant sound dared to be heard, she pounced upon it with her finger on her

lips, and strangled it in its birth. Accordingly, the moment Sir Mark alighted at the door, she put his very first question asleep with an emphatic "hush!" and then laying her lips to his ear favoured him with an inaudible answer. Awed by this beginning, the Baronet suffered himself, like one of the deaf and dumb, to be telegraphed up stairs into what is called the best bed-room, and coming suddenly out of the broad light of day into a gloom mitigated only by the slender ray which crept through the mere cracks of the shutters, the fire-light even being studiously screened off, he felt for some bewildered moments as if blindness was added to his other bereavements. At last a voice which he could scarcely hear called him by name to the bed-side, where a form he could barely see clutched him feebly round the neck, and for some time held him in a silent and tremulous embrace. The voice again made an attempt to speak, when suddenly the hands unclasped, and the body fell back with a death-like helplessness on the pillow.

"He's dead, woman—he's dying!" shouted the agitated Baronet;—"let me see the last of my

brother!" and tearing down a curtain with each hand as he spoke, he endeavoured with fixed eyes to pierce the thick gloom which hung before him.

In obedience to the command, Mrs. Hanway opened one solitary leaf of the shutters, but which by chance allowed a partial stream of light to fall full upon the bed, and disclosed a sight that rendered the gazer almost as insensible as the being before him. The letter he had received, the few words of the invalid himself, had led Sir Mark to believe that he was about to see a brother; but when he was able to distinguish the face of the sufferer, he beheld with unspeakable horror the countenance of his father, at whose death-bed he had stood and wept some ten years before.

CHAPTER IV.

"This very doctor frankly owns that he does not cure the distempers which are already formed, but only prevents their formation; and the medicine he prescribes is fasting upon fasting, until the patient is clean skin and bone, as if a consumption was not worse than a fever."

SANCHO PANZA.

To account for the awful phenomenon recorded in the last chapter, it may suffice to refer those who have often looked on their kindred after death to their own experience. Such persons, in gazing on the rigid marble features of the departed, must have been sometimes struck by a startling likeness of the corpse to some branch of consanguinity, more or less remote, thus proving, by a resemblance never recognisable during life, the fidelity of the family mould. Attenuated, perhaps, by disease, and further sharpened by the contractions of the flesh and muscles after death, the features assume

an expression sometimes entirely different from that of the same countenance when living, and the spectator becomes unexpectedly aware, that former dissimilarities in physiognomy arose merely from the variances of flesh and fibre. The mortal change moreover sometimes reduces the disparities of age, making the old apparently younger, and the young older—so that the father and son, mother and daughter, appear in each other's likeness with an identity perfectly astounding to the beholder.

The Baronet, therefore, only saw a countenance on which care, an unwholesome climate, and premature old age, had anticipated the hand of death, and worked out the resemblance which had given such a shock to his feelings. To add to the ghastliness of the marble face of the invalid, each closed eye was encircled by a deep tinge of livid blue, the effects of a disproportionate dose of laudanum, which the officious but well meaning Mrs. Hanway had introduced over-night in his gruel. To the infinite relief of Sir Mark, the sufferer, who had merely fainted from over exertion and agitation, shortly unclosed his eyes, and with returning ani-

mation the likeness to his parent in some degree faded away. To describe what followed, would require a more graphic implement than the pen, for much of the first communion between the brothers consisted in embraces and mute tokens of recognition—neither having command enough of voice to discourse. The invalid was the first to speak.

"I have brought home my bones at last," he murmured, "though only to lay them in the family vault."

"God forbid, Herbert," replied the worthy Baronet, grasping somewhat too heartily the emaciated hand that was held out to him. "But keep up your heart, and you'll give the old enemy a few winds and doubles afore then. Many a man's been as low in flesh, and yet been got into condition, by help of good keep and his native air. We'll have you on your legs again by next grass."

"It will wave over me, Mark," returned the other with a faint shake of the head, "and as for my native air, it has shortened the few days I had to live by its keenness and violence last night.

Lungs that have panted and decayed near the tropics, will be ill able to encounter the cutting blasts of an English winter."

"We'll have Dr. Bellamy to 'em," rejoined the over-sanguine Baronet. "Whatever he may be at gout, I'll back him for a known good hand at a thickness o' the wind. I remember being a bit of a high-blower myself, and as they said, by riding through Willow Brook, instead of going round by the bridge—"

"If the gentleman's lungs is touched," interrupted Mrs. Hanway, "there's nothin' worse than talking and letting the air into 'em. It's what Dr. Bellamy's most strict in; and when his patients is so unprudent as to ask what's the matter with 'em, and what the medicine's meant to do—and if he has met with the like case afore, and such like, he never answers a single question. But thank goodness, here comes Dr. Bellamy to prescribe for himself."

In fact a very unnecessary and prolonged double knock at the door, which to a hypochondriac might have suggested a funeral roll of a muffled drum,

here announced the physician, whose foot, by no means shod with felt, was soon heard ascending the stairs, while a pompous voice in a tone far above a whisper, maintained a running conversation with some one at the stairfoot. We will venture a description of the disciple of Galen. At first sight you were in doubt whether to set him down as a doctor or a pedagogue, for his dress presented one very characteristic appendage of the latter; namely, a square-cut black coat, which never was, never would be, and probably never had been, in the fashion. A profusion of cambric frill, huge silver shoe-buckles, a snuff-box of the same metal, and a gold headed cane, belonged rather to the costume of a physician of the period. He wore a very precise wig of a very decided brown, regularly crisped at the top like a bunch of endive, and in front following the exact curves of the arches of two bushy eyebrows. He had dark eyes, a prominent nose, and a wide mouth, the corners of which, in smiling, were drawn downward towards his double chin. A florid colour on his face hinted a plethoric habit, while a portly body and a very short thick

neck bespoke an apoplectic tendency. Warned by these indications, prudence had made him a strict water-drinker, and abstemious in his diet—a mode of treatment which he applied to all his patients, short or tall, stout or thin, with whom, whatever their disease, he invariably began by reducing them, as an arithmetician would say, to their lowest terms. This mode of treatment raised him so much in the estimation of the parochial authorities, that, with their usual economical tenderness towards the poor rates, except when vestry dinners were concerned, they unanimously conferred on him the appointment of parish doctor, under a well-grounded conviction that, in his dietetic prescriptions, he would never over-pamper the pauper bodies confided to his care. His deportment was characterised by a profusion of ceremonious bows, and set complimentary phrases, borrowed, probably, from some antiquated code of manners that he had studied in his youth, and which he delivered with such pomp of emphasis and set solemnity of face, that the dignified title of Dr. Bellamy invariably degenerated, behind his back, into the more popular

alias of Old Formality. Such was the personage now introduced to the sick chamber, where he stood bowing profoundly to Sir Mark, whom he was somewhat surprised to see on his feet.

"Egad, Doctor," exclaimed the Baronet, "you have hunted me down at last, though how you hit upon the foil—"

"I had the pleasure," said the Doctor, "of seeing Bedlamite at the door;" and the animal, if he had been present, would doubtless have come in for a congée.

"Sir Mark, we must get you home instantly, and put you to bed. What further measures may be necessary to expel the gout from your stomach——"

"Expel the devil," said Sir Mark, in a vehement whisper, "I'm as well as ever I was in my life. You've overrun the scent, man,—your patient Doctor, lies yonder."

"I beg a thousand pardons," said "Old Formality," bowing afresh to the dimity furniture of the bed, from which the voice of the invalid was heard.

" Mark, if you love me, give the worthy Doctor no trouble on my behalf: I am past human help. I have prayed but to live for one purpose, which is all but accomplished—send for my son."

At this moment the gruff voice of Jonas Hanway was heard in altercation with that of a boy, accompanied with a sound of scuffling, which approached nearer and nearer to the room, till eventually the door was flung open, and a youth darting suddenly in, cast himself on the bed by the side of the invalid. For a few minutes there was a dead pause broken only by the sobbings of the intruder, whom the parent endeavoured to compose from time to time by a feeble caress. Sir Mark in the meantime, seated himself on the other side of the bed, and grasped the left hand of the boy, who his heart told him was his nephew.

" I know, brother, what you mean," said the warm hearted Baronet, " he shall be as a son of my own—he shall be all one with Ringwood and Raby; he shall be as one of own—he shall, by G— ! " The invalid made no reply, but by raising himself on his elbow towards the speaker, and for

a minute the two brothers seemed to look into each other's soul. At last a languid smile passed over the features of the younger, and with a faint nod of acknowledgment, he composed himself again on the pillow, where his eyes closed and his lips moved, as if in mental thanksgiving.

The scene was of such interest, that Dr. Bellamy and Mrs. Hanway, the only persons present who had "the gift of tongues," were subdued into silence; at last the respiration of the invalid was only indicated by the feeble and irregular heaving of the bed clothes.

"Thanks be to Providence," said Mrs. Hanway, "he is composing himself to sleep; we must trust him awile to nature, and he shall have something composing as soon as he wakes."

"I shall have the pleasure of sending a soporific," said the Doctor, "as soon as I get home."

"And he shall take it," added Mrs. Hanway, "if I wake him up on purpose."

Sir Mark, whose plain common sense had detected the approaches of sleep, in the meantime drew the boy by gentle violence from the bed,

and led him from the room, followed by Dr. Bellamy, leaving Mrs. Hanway, nothing loth, in charge of the sick chamber.

As they descended the stairs, the Baronet, in a melancholy tone, addressed the Doctor.

"I am afraid, Doctor, you have come up too late to stop the earth my poor brother is going to."

"I have the honour of entirely coinciding with your opinion," returned the obsequious physician. "It is evident the patient has enjoyed a plethoric habit, inducing diversion of the gastric juices, derangement of the whole nervous functions, attended with febrile symptoms, decay of the vital energies, and all the other concomitants of a disorganised constitutional system. Palliatives, Sir Mark,—palliatives are all we can administer. In the course of an hour I will again pay my respects to the case, and ad interim I shall have the honour of exhibiting a few grains of opium in the pillular form." With these words he took up a huge quaker-like hat, and making a ceremonious bow, intimated to the Baronet that he had "the pleasure of bidding him good morning."

CHAPTER V.

"Some of these second-sighted persons will pretend to see a funeral, and bespeak the death of the individual who is shortly to occupy a hearse."

TOUR IN THE HIGHLANDS.

"ASKING your honour's pardon," said Jonas, meeting the Baronet at the door of the parlour, "the young gentleman's coming up was no fault of mine. Mrs. Hanway thinks people as is to part for ever had better be separated, and I had him confined to the bar, but he begged so to see his papa afore he died, that I hadn't the heart to refuse him, and particularly as he kicked and bit quite astonishin' for his age—please to walk this way," he continued, waving one hand towards the parlour; "as the whist club is apt to get noisy, and sick people don't agree with loud singing, I have got 'em to dissolve themselves for a week."

"I'll make it all up to you, Jonas," said the Baronet "whist club and all. As for the boy, he may stay with us. Why as I live," he exclaimed, examining for the first time the face of his nephew, "he's of a cross breed, he's as brown as Gipsey Jack!" The boy thus referred to instantly plucked his hand from the Baronet's, and with a quick movement of resentment turned away a face in which red had now the mastery, while his eyes glistened almost fiercely through the springing tears.

"Come, come," said Sir Mark, laying his broad hand with an encouraging slap, but which might have served for a corrective one, on the youth's shoulder; "what I said about the skin was only for the sake of giving tongue—a good horse can't be of a bad colour."

"The best I ever set behind was a brown one," remarked Jonas, "let alone a fault in his temper."

This unlucky illustration, though adduced in perfect innocence by the ex-coachman of Sir Theodore Bowles, was taken as a pointed allusion by the im-

petuous Creole, who instantly discharged the first object at hand at the astonished utterer. The missile happened to be the old fashioned domino box of the Whist Club. But passion had misdirected the aim, and its violence fell on "Unlucky Joe," who at that moment entered the club-room to break the broken knees of the piebald mare to the publican. The narrative, however, died stillborn, for the box struck him full in the mouth, the shock scattering the whole stock of bony counters, like a shower of loosened teeth. The poor postillion instantly clapped both his hands to his mouth, and for some minutes seemed to be suffering under the operation of some wheelwright who had undertaken the part of Cartwright at a short notice.

"It's ruffinly usage, so it is," he exclaimed as soon as he could speak, "and it's what nobody but me would have taken quietly; when accidents happen, as I'm too poor to stand the damage, it's always took out in kicks. I was goin' to ax pardon about the mare, but now Master Hanway we're quits." At the mention of this, Jonas bolted off the nearest way to the stable. In the meantime the

Baronet recognised the features of the sporting post-boy who had hedged off the piebald mare at Windmill Grange.

"If I recollect right my lad, I owe ye a trifle for postage, and something besides for my nephew's mishap with the box of dominoes, for it was no shot of Jonas's; but I must give it you some other time," he added, thrusting first one hand and then the other into the pockets of his buckskins, but which, in his haste to escape from Dr. Bellamy, he had forgotten to furnish.

"It's like my luck all over," muttered the fatalist to himself, as he left the room, "my misfortunes is paid down on the nail; but for a bit of a Godsend, I'm obliged to give tick."

The Baronet thus left to the company of a sullen boy, with whom he did not care to make the first advance towards conversation, looked round the room for something to divert his thoughts with, but after a vain search was compelled to give himself up to his own cogitations; he had just taken one elbow chair and lifted his legs upon another, when through the parlour door, which remained

open, he saw Jonas re-enter and pass towards the bar, followed by a little dapper rosy-faced man in black; a jingling of glass ensued, and then an audible smack of the lips, in token of the relish of the libation. To the dialogue which followed, the Baronet became unavoidably a listener.

"It's capital, Master Hanway, capital! worth a whole pint of the poor stuff at the Bell."

"I have it straight from the distiller's, Master Naylor; when one wants good unadulterated liquor, there's nothing like going to the fountain-head."

"Aye, aye, Master Hanway, but at the Bell, you know what I mean, they're apt to go to the fountain head rather too much. Spirits, as I says sometimes to a taker-on, spirits won't bear too much lowering. The society's very grumpy about it, I assure you; very grumpy indeed."

"That's to say, the society for people as want to be buried?" enquired the voice of the landlord.

"The very same, Master Hanway, and though I say it, as should'nt say it, being president of the club, as snug and merry a little free and easy as you'd wish to be interred by. Only two guineas a

year, including mutes, bearers, feathers, and the best pall, with every thing agreeable. You couldn't bury yourself for the money. The liquors is but so so, as I have said before, but the Bell mayn't always be our funeral bell, as we call it by way of a joke. There's more houses to meet at in the place, and as I told the landlord t'other day, we're not screwed down."

"I've heard the Black Horse very well spoke of," remarked the disinterested host of the Rabbits.

"No, no, Master Hanway, we've black horses enough of our own. But that's by way of a joke. However, as I said before, the Bell don't answer, and as I says to the members, if so be we are to shift our tressels, we may as well pitch them again among friends. Now there's my old neighbour and crony Dick Tablet belongs to a society, and for old acquaintance sake I should prefer to club our clubs together at the same sign."

"And that's the very sign you're now drinking at," rejoined the voice of honest Jonas with some eagerness. "The Whist Club and the Rabbits has pulled together these fifteen years, and I make bold

to hope will keep step for as many more to come. For, as Master Tablet says jokingly, every Friday, as long as I don't shuffle 'em, they'll never cut me."

"They'd never better themselves if they did, Master Hanway; the liquors at this house is capital, if they are like the Cogniac. And then as to the extensive prospect, as I said before, the Bell's a fool to it. By-the-by, talking of prospects, what a wonderful pleasant look out you must have, Master Hanway, from the windows of your best bed-room."

"Pretty enough in summer, Master Naylor, when there's any grass and a few lean beasts upon the Flats. But it's a melancholy prospect for him as now lies there with his last shutters shut."

"I never observed 'em, Master Hanway, never, upon my word, or it wouldn't have become me to stand here saying things by the way of joke, and a change expected in the house. But such is our memento moris in this world. Here am I, as we may say, in the vanity and pride of life, and a Baronet's brother dying by inches over my head."

"It's no slow work, Master Naylor, it's next thing to sudden death. His consumption, as Mrs. H——

says, has broke into a gallop, and he'll go down like a shot. Old Formality, Dr. Bellamy that is to say, has just timed him, and says his last stage will be done within the hour."

"We're cut off, Master Hanway, like the flowers of the field. Here to-day—gone to-morrow—all flesh is grass. It's what we must all come to. Our breath was given to be took away again. Such is the common lot. We're all mortal, no one can call to-morrow his own, but death must pay the debt of nature. Dust we are and to dust we must return. Such being the case, Master Hanway, delicacy in course forbids introducing the burial society into the house till after the obsequies. In the meantime you will oblige by presenting my dutiful inquiries to Sir Mark, or may be by sticking my card up on the mantelpiece, or in the frame of the looking glass, or any where prominent where sure to be seen. It will be a hearse and six, and a lead coffin in course, as before. I had the pleasure of performing to the late Baronet."

"I'll cram your undertaking card down your own d——d throat, and perform your own body to

the horsepond," thundered a voice from the parlour, and the sentence had hardly been passed when the culprit found himself in the hands of the executioner. "Ar'n't you ashamed," he continued, "to stand croaking over a fellow creature as if he was so much carrion?" And a shake accompanied the words that threatened to divest the human raven of his dingy plumage, and at the same time shivered the first word of his apology into a demi-semi-quaver. To render the finale more operatic, the quavering ended by the violent bolting out of a lower note, followed by a melodramatic stagger of the performer, the whole length of the passage; concluding, as the pantomime always comes last, with a clown-like plunge of his head into the stomach of Master Tablet, whom fate had just brought to the door, with his own card of "obliging inquiries."

"Gog's nouns! Master Naylor," exclaimed the stonemason, as he recovered his breath and equilibrium, "it's early hours of the day, for a man to be losing his legs." Another moment however sufficed to convince him that the undertaker was

quite able to walk, and with some celerity. A whisper from Jonas, with a side glance at Sir Mark, speedily explained the mystery, whereupon Master Tablet instantly faced about, without calling for his morning draught, and left the Rabbits as though it had been a whist night, without playing a card. For another twenty minutes, the Baronet was left in the parlour to his own companionship, his nephew having taken advantage of the fracas to escape up stairs to the chamber door, where he lay couchant like a leopard. At last the usual noise announced the return of Dr. Bellamy, whose presence for the first time was welcomed by Sir Mark as a thing to be desired. While the worthy Doctor, with a deliberation peculiarly appropriate to the place and the occasion, divests himself of his broad brimmed hat, and his gloves, his spatterdashes, his riding coat and his comforter, we will take the liberty of presenting a case of one of the most curious phenomena in the mysterious world of dreams.

Contrary to the received opinion, that sleep, as a mirror, reflects back merely the predominant

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images of the waking mind—it more frequently happens that the imagination, released from the control of the external senses, flies with a truant spirit, to scenes and deeds as remote as possible from those of its daily bondage. The night cap is its cap of liberty. On this principle the felon in the condemned cell—during that awful season, when, contrary to the calendar of time, the shortest night and the longest are within a few hours of each other—instead of erecting visionary scaffolds, haunted by a horrible phantasmagoria of the demons of crime and remorse, instead of withering under fiend-like impersonations of shame, terror, scorn, and human vengeance, he wanders through woods dear to boyhood, or angles placidly in some well-remembered stream, with thoughts as pure and calm as its lucid waters. Even thus, in lieu of dallying "with graves, and worms, and epitaphs," the discursive fancy of the sleeping invalid mounted with him like the pilgrim's vision from "the Valley of the Shadow of Death," to the Delectable Mountains of health, youth, and vigour. He was again a gallant soldier, bounding over the field of glory on

a war-horse, gifted with an elasticity and power exalted, by the soaring phantasy, to a pitch somewhat supernatural. Anon "a change came o'er the spirit of his dream:" he was disgraced for some undefined crime, and fallen under the extreme sentence of a court-martial. The troops were drawn up, the sentence was read, the firing party took their station, the command was given, the volley roared, and the victim awoke—the rattle of the musketry, by a marvellous phenomenon in dreaming, coinciding exactly with the thundering double-knock of the physician.

The Doctor, followed by Sir Mark, had accordingly reached only the middle of the stairs, when he was met by Mrs. Hanway, who, with a self-complacent smile, informed him that the patient "had woke agin quite charmin', and had himself expressed that a change had taken place for the better."

"I am proud to say I expected as much," replied Old Formality; "and the efficacy of the pills I have had the honour to prescribe," he added, bowing to Sir Mark, "affords me, in this case, a peculiar gratification."

At the mention of pills Mrs. Hanway uplifted her hands and eyes with a significant expression, which, luckily for the Doctor, escaped his notice. Little, indeed, did he dream that the Mercury of medicine had encountered, in a by-road, a junior messenger of the Post Office, as much disposed for a little relaxation as himself, and that the pills in question had been driven out of the ring of memory by those heavier marble boluses which, in the schoolboy's vocabulary, are called alleys and taws.

CHAPTER VI.

"In a fortnight, or three weeks," added my Uncle Toby, smiling, "he might march."

TRISTRAM SHANDY.

ON entering the sick chamber the visiters found an alteration in the appearance of the patient, that seemed fully to justify Mrs. Hanway's bulletin; his cough had entirely ceased, there was a slight tinge of red on his cheek, and his eyes sparkled even lustrously, as if life, by a successful rally at the very close of the mortal contest, had obtained an unexpected victory. He was sitting up in bed, supported by pillows, one hand in the possession of his son, who covered it with kisses, the other was taken without opposition by Dr. Bellamy, who applied himself with great ceremony to the pulse, and after a solemn pause of two minutes he intimated, by a smirk and a nod to Sir Mark, that the verdict was favourable.

"God be praised," ejaculated the Baronet. "Egad, Doctor, let me alone for a judge. I told you he was full of running. Herbert, my boy," he continued, grasping the hand which Old Formality had resigned, "how d'ye find yourself?"

"Better, Mark—better, beyond conception. I feel a lightness and freedom from suffering, such as I have not experienced for many a long day."

"Hark to him, Doctor," cried the delighted Sir Mark; "hark to Herbert! he's twice the voice he had in the morning. He's got his second wind. He'll give old boney the slip—he will by Jove:" and his rising exultation outstripping his powers of eloquence, he vented his hilarity in a way as natural to him as breathing, namely, by a subdued but triumphant yoicks!

"My narcotic pills have done wonders most assuredly," replied the Doctor, "though at the same time I must confess myself under some obligation to the excellence of the constitution I have had the honour to assist;" and the bed again received a bow worthy of that old school of manners which polished Sir Charles Grandison.

"With the Doctor's permission, Mark, I will be moved up to the Hall to-morrow—I feel quite equal to the exertion, indeed, if it were necessary, I should not hesitate to undertake the removal this evening?"

"With all deference, Sir, to your own feeling of ability—which I beg leave to say I do not at all dubitate in the least—yet in the responsible character of a medical adviser I feel called upon to decline forming a decided opinion for the present. In the evening I shall again pay my respects to the disease, and in the meantime, we will prescribe a febrifuge, which I shall be infinitely obliged by your taking every half hour; with regard to dietetics, I will instruct the good woman of the house—Mr. Herbert Tyrrel, I am your most obedient—Sir Mark, I am your very devoted." Two twin bows followed, and the physician again descended the stairs with the noise peculiar to persons of his stamp. Mrs. Hanway interrupted him at the bottom, and had ample time to receive her instructions, while helping him on with his very complicated defences against weather.

"No solids, Mrs. Hanway, nor much liquid—

and, above all, no stimulants;" was the summary of the charge.

"Not for the world, Doctor," exclaimed Mrs. Hanway, "we've no stimulus in the house," so saying she dropped a low curtsey and returned to the bar to complete the beating up of the yolks of two eggs with a large bumper of port.

The Doctor on his cob, a sort of roan compounded of rhubarb and magnesia, and which neither galloped, trotted, nor cantered, but had a pace of its own made up of all three, had barely cleared a quarter of a mile when the voice of Sir Mark was heard overhead shouting—"Stop him! for God's sake head him back—halloo to Dr. Bellamy!" But the Doctor, muffled up all but the peak of his nose, was already far beyond the reach of lungs more stentorian than those of Mrs. Hanway. She however gave three heron-like screams to the desert air of the Flats, and, according to her own motto of "be prepared for the worst," she rushed up stairs, armed with a bunch of feathers and a phial of sal volatile. The patient, however, when she entered the room seemed beyond her

aid: he was lying on his back, his hands firmly clenched till the knuckles started out like marbles, his eyelids closed together forcibly within a deep hollow, his cheeks sunk, while his lips were so tensely drawn that the teeth appeared with a ghastly prominence. It was indeed the very aspect of a corpse, for though not dead, his features had undergone that prophetic alteration which is expressed by the popular phrase of being "changed for death." The treacherous appearances which had so rejoiced Sir Mark, and had deceived Dr. Bellamy himself, had originated only in that transient elevation of spirits alluded to by Romeo—

> How oft when men are at the point of death
> Have they been merry? which their keepers call
> A lightning before death.

In such a case the sparkle of the eye is but as the upflashing of an expiring taper; and the rosy forgery of health upon the cheek resembles only those ruddy sunsets portending gloom and tears. Thus the corporeal reaction became suddenly evident by an alarming swoon, from which with

great difficulty the sufferer was recovered. At last he unclosed his eyes and gazed around him as wildly as if they had opened on another world.

"Indiana," he exclaimed, rivetting two eager orbs of a startling brilliancy on the face of the horror-stricken Mrs. Hanway, "wherefore are you here? take her away—pull her off me, quick;"—and his arm waved impetuously.—"She has a knife!"

"His head is going," whispered Mrs. Hanway to Sir Mark; "it is time to send for the clergy."

"Remove the boy," continued the strong wild voice of delirium; "he must not see me bleed—his mother did it."

"Ah, papa! dear papa! don't send me from you—pray don't," sobbed the terrified boy, struggling with all his might to retain the hand which the invalid, with that fitful strength which belongs to frenzy, disengaged by a single effort.

"Away, woman," he cried, "don't cling to me; away—out of my sight—we part for ever!"

A long pause of exhaustion succeeded, during which his eyes gradually became duller, and when he spoke again, it was with a tone so altered, so

feeble and mild, that it seemed as if two distinct spirits with their several voices inhabited the same body.

"I am going, Mark, going rapidly; the grave is closing round me—I am dead to the waist. Come nearer, Mark—nearer still;" the Baronet placed his ear close to his brother's lips, and actually staggered backward as the appalling supernatural voice, abruptly resumed, fell with full force on the astounded sense. "Don't hurt her," it shouted, "she's mad—mad with jealousy! Indiana, you had no cause for this!" and the intense bright eyes again fixed themselves on the countenance of Mrs. Hanway, who, in an agony of undefinable terror, sunk on her knees and shrouded herself in the curtain.

"In the name of God, Herbert," said the bewildered Sir Mark, "if you have any thing on your mind make a clean breast of it. If it's about the boy, I've sworn to back him through this world, and while I live I'll ride with him round the course." The invalid for a moment gazed on his brother, as if without comprehending his words;

but the caresses and sobs of his son recalled a spirit which seemed already hovering between earth and heaven.

"He loves me as fondly as his mother did," said the dying parent, with a voice again feeble and tremulous; "but his temper has some of her tropical fire, which, as a last injunction, I conjure his future father to repress."

"Make your mind easy, Herbert," said the Baronet, "he's a mettlesome colt, I know, but I'll drive him at the lower bar. I wish the Almighty had pleased to leave the reins in your own hand; but his will must be done; since our hopes are come to this check, and we must part, all we can do is to look forward to a better place. If you would like to have the curate to ease your mind ——"

"I feel no more misgivings," answered the dying man, "than a Christian ought on the brink of an unknown world. I have my hopes and my fears—there are dark clouds and bright clouds before me—and they both blind me alike." His voice now sunk so suddenly as to be

scarcely audible, but he made a sign to his child and his brother, who stooped down to receive his last embrace. "God bless—both," he whispered, "Indiana—I forgive all—Walter, don't cry—we shall soon—be—in England." The sound ceased with a long-drawn sigh. The dying man fixed his last look full upon Sir Mark, who, as he gazed on the motionless eyes before him, saw the transit of life as visibly as if a taper had been removed suddenly from behind each window, so called in Scripture, of the human soul.

CHAPTER VII.

"Come, come—the pills! where are the pills? produce them!"

THE HONEYMOON.

As soon as the breath had left the body, Mrs. Hanway made a sign to Sir Mark to withdraw his nephew from the room, in order that the necessary duties might be performed to the corpse.

"Poor Herbert, he is gone at last, and God rest his soul!" he ejaculated, withdrawing his arm for ever, and by an agonising effort, from under the inanimate head, which seemed now to retain it with a pressure of a ton of marble: "here am I older and more deserving to be cut off than poor Herbert—but the best always top the fence first into the other world. Thank God," he continued, taking the boy's hand into his own huge grasp, "he died easy, and in his own country, where he

was roused, and his own friends in at his death, instead of being run into in the West Indies among a pack of heathens and blacks. But talking here is out of place, when melancholy duties are waited for;" so saying, he drew his nephew with some force from the bed, and led him down stairs to the parlour, where he began preaching composure and resignation to the weeping boy, in a discourse very different from that of a commonplace funeral sermon, but quite as worthy of publication.

"Come now," he said, "take heart a little, and consider what must be must. Your poor father is dead and gone, and now you must look up to me; if his run hasn't been as long as some, he has, maybe, been saved a deal of distress and struggling on his last legs, and which is better than seeing him wearing out by inches, and death having him in view all the time. For my own part it comforts me to think I have shook his last hands and closed his last eyes, and shall be able to see him go to earth as a Christian ought, in the old family vault, with his own kith and kin. It seems hard, no doubt, to part company with those that

are so dear to us, but it's so with one and all, whatever their pedigrees; for if death didn't draft off now and then out of all our breeds, the world would be overstocked: that's the order of nature. Such being the case, we should meet our misfortunes like men, instead of taking on and being noisy and babbling in our griefs, as if that would head him back again, and which is quite impossible. To be always trying back with repinings after what is lost and gone, is nothing but running counter in the sight of the Almighty, and likely to bring punishment on our backs for such a course. To be sure, when my own sire died, I gave tongue just as you do, and said I could not live over it; and yet here I am, rising fifty-four if I'm a day, and able to ride up to any hounds in the kingdom. As I said before, we must all die some day or other, and in consequence either we must all lose our fathers or our fathers must lose us, and Providence has wisely ordained that they should generally go first."

In this practical style of consolation the worthy Baronet continued for some time longer, till coming

to a check, as he would have called it, from his words having overridden his ideas, he was compelled to hold hard, when he discovered that his nephew, overcome by grief, watching, and exertion, had fallen through mere exhaustion into a profound sleep. Taking advantage of the circumstance, Sir Mark stole away to the bar, and gave an order which brought Jonas's neat postchaise from ordinary into commission. By substituting a blue jacket for a brown one, doffing a white apron, and changing a pair of slip-slop shoes for top-boots, in about twenty minutes Pots, like an anagram, was transposed into Post, and sprung his four-wheeled rattle at the door. The youth, still sleeping, was lifted into the vehicle, the Baronet followed, after a few instructions to Jonas, and thrusting his head out of the front window, gave the whispered direction "to Tylney Hall."

Just as the chaise departed, the landlady descended the stairs. "It's all over—it's all over, Mr. Hanway," she exclaimed, entering the bar somewhat hastily, and helping herself to a glass of one of her own restoratives. "Poor gentleman,"

said Jonas, "it's very sudden, but I said when I saw him, he was going down hill without the drag on; with his sufferings it's a happy release."

"A happy release indeed," echoed a voice from the kitchen, with a vehemence as if it enjoyed its exaltation from the low whisper to which all the tongues in the house had been subjected. "If it warn't a sin to rejoice over another's latter-end I'd say a good riddince. What with making up slops, and broths, and gruels, and sagoes, and arrow-roots, and panadas, for one as won't eat 'em, and then having to live on 'em in the kitchen—for missis won't have anythin' wasted,—well, I've giv warnin' a hundred times, but now it shall be in arnest!"

To tell the truth, the speaker had but too much reason for such complaints, for Mrs. Hanway was one of those good managers who in modelling a figurative statue of economy, are apt to make both ends meet by allowing no waste. It is doubtful, however, whether Betty the cook would have ventured on such an audible statement of her grievances, if her courage had not been reinforced

by something more potent than barley-water and apple-tea. Forewarned by hints from up-stairs, and signs quite as significant as death-watches, or tallowy winding sheets, or coffins out of the fire, she had ascertained that the sick gentleman would soon be a dead one, and with the vulgar instinct of selfishness, she immediately began to constitute herself his residuary legatee. First she administered to the old port that should have been beaten up with the yolk of eggs; secondly to the sherry intended to flavour the calves foot jelly; thirdly, to the mountain provided for making a white wine whey; and then the Cogniac about to be burnt for a stomachic. Fifthly, she gulped down the sal volatile and water, which stood ready as a restorative; and finally, the ardent appetite increasing by what it fed on, she swallowed even the spirits of wine destined to be consumed with camphor, by way of precaution against infection. Inflamed by these various stimulants her mind began to open, as an oyster does when subjected to unusual heat; and out flew the diatribe against the poor defunct gentleman, and his poor diet.

The unlucky words reached a pair of quick ears in the bar, and were not at all lost on the irritable Mrs. Hanway. She was in that peculiar mood to which some tempers are liable after agitation and excitement, when the nerves are still vibrating and urging the possessor by way of vent to exertion or violence, in short she laboured under a fit of what is emphatically called the fidgets. Deposed suddenly from the active situation of head nurse to a living patient to the passive one of being custos of a corpse, she wanted something whereon to expend the surplus energies of mind and body; accordingly the obnoxious words were no sooner uttered than she rushed into the kitchen, and planted her face at bare toasting distance against the fiery visage of the cook, who stood balancing on two legs, not quite so steadily as a peg top does on one.

"Can I believe my ears," she asked in a vehement whisper, intended to preserve the due decorum of a house of mourning.—"Can I believe my own senses! —To dare to rejoice over a fellow creature's departure, and the corpse in the very house—I wonder, hussey, your own latter end did not fly in your face!"

"What I've said I've said," answered the cook doggedly, and I an't a going to eat my words —no nor the sick messes and slops nayther, if it comes to that. So if you mean, Ma'am, to hold me to my warnin, you may Ma'am. As for my own dyings, I only wonder I'm alive this blessed day, so I do—what with your quack doctering and nosterums. They've been the real ruin of my precious health, that's what they have—the Lord forgive you!"

"O the wretch," ejaculated the indignant mistress, "to have no more gratitude.—This comes of my nursing, and proscribing you, and giving it with my own hands—only last Christmas, and snatching you back from death's door."

"Yes, Ma'am,—and well nigh chucked me in agen at the window," returned Betty, "thro' giving me so such cooling physic in the hard frosteses. My own mother that bore me would not have knowed such a bag of bones. Since I've been here I've swallowed whole pecks of pills as if they was nothing but green peas, and have took rubub enuff

to turn me into a Turk. I can't bear it no more, and so as I said before, if so be I'm to stay in the place, the physic must be put on the same futting as the tea and sugar—a guinea a year and find myself."

"You have never taken anything in this house," retorted Mrs. Hanway, "except for your good—and when your system wanted lowering, and for purifying the blood—and if you have been a little reduced or so, haven't you had nourishing things and all sorts of support, provided it was light and easy of digesting?"

"My disgesting, Ma'am, thank God, wants no such lightening. I was noted from a child for a strong stomach, only it can't abide weak slops. Sago and sich is very well for the consumptious as lies in a sick bed, and hasn't got a hard place; but lawk help you, what's their works to mine, coughing and wheezing is one thing, and frying beef steaks and inguns is another. If it warn't for my strong constitution, it's a miracle of miracles how I stand it—what with roast, and biled, and fried afore a great

flaming fire, and in everlasting flurries and hurries, now this here pot biles over, then that ere fat ketches, and then the sut tumbles, and the dratted cat's at the drippin pan—and is a little wishy washy drop of barley water the thing to cool and refresh one after the likes o' that—not that I'm going, Ma'am, to complain of what I was bred and born to, but only to takin more slops, and especially physic, than belongs to cookery, and my wages not riz thereby—to be sure the bottles would be summut, but arter one is doctored to death, who's to come to me up in heaven and say, there Betty, there's the empty vials for your parquisites."

"Your perquisites indeed!" cried Mrs. Hanway, waxing in wrath, "a pretty speech truly, it's high time you left the Rabbits when you begin to talk of perquisites—but you shant stay another night in the house, no not an hour—perquisites indeed! I'll have you go this moment."

"What this very moment Mam—this very dividual moment, this moment as I'm speaking Mam?"

"Ay, hussey, this very moment, and the sooner the better."

"Why there then—I takes your warnin, and washes my hands o' my place"—and as she spoke, the unruly ruler of the roast deliberately relaxed her ruddy fingers, letting fall from one hand a saucepan of sago, and from the other a basin of arrow root, as dab and suddenly as Corporal Trim dropped his hat to illustrate his discourse upon death. Like the veteran she neither dashed them down, nor flung them, nor pitched them, nor jerked them, but let them go plump, as if apoplexy had given her notice to quit instead of Mrs. Hanway. The latter was not a woman to bear with wanton breakage. In fact the Tartar, as of old, began to rise on the ruin of China, but, luckily for the devoted cook, her fury was arrested by the appearance of a boy laden with a basket in the front passage; no other in fact, than the tardy walking dispensary of Doctor Bellamy.

Doctors' boys, like chimney sweeps, universally run very small, and Old Formality's urchin really looked as stunted as if his board as well as his wages had been derived from his master's shop. Perched at a door in charge of the old-fashioned

covered chaise, he looked actually like a periwinkle shrivelled in its shell. He had two little dark bolus-looking eyes, set squintingly in a long, pale, old face, in the middle of which stood a nose originally a pug, but made seemingly still pugger by its habitual turn-up at the nauseous freight that he commonly carried. His mouth had an appropriate screw-up of its own, as if hinting that he considered his place was to take out medicine, and not to take it in, while a chin of disproportionate length rested on a couple of linen dog-ears, which he called a collar. As for his livery, it was of a very decided blue, turned up with quite as decided a red, matching exactly the very colours of the two glass globes which by night glared over the Doctor's door—for as yet the chemists had not compounded those delicate tints, which in our days emulate the fashionable Parisian hues of eau de Nil, terre d'Egypte, and flammes d'enfer. Small as the imp was, however, his predecessor must have been smaller, for his clothes did not fit—his sleeves hung as distant from his sides as if he held an imaginary quartern loaf under each arm, and his knee breeches

buttoned above his knee, his gaiters were an inch too short, and his shoes were as much too long, but were kept on by a liberal allowance of supplementary *tow* thrust into each extremity. Nothing else was big enough for him save his hat, which he kept from extinguishing his eyes by wearing his pocket handkerchief and two sheets of brown paper in the crown, as well as letting it rest on the collar of his coat behind, a collision which had given a truly clerical turn to the back of the brim. Gloves he had none, though, as far as appearance went, he scarcely needed them, his hands looking always too red or too blue to be taken for the natural skin.

"If you please, Ma'am," said the dwarf, fumbling out a small box from his basket, "if you please, Ma'am, I've brought the sick gentleman's pills."

The wrath of Mrs. Hanway was at its climax. Second only to the mortal sin which so horrified John Bunyan, she reckoned the inexpiable crime of letting a sick gentleman go to heaven without his physic. With indignant hand she seized a fleshy appendage, which, like a Corinthian volute, curled

downward from the brim of the culprit's hat, and a caper instantly followed that strikingly proved how much the style in dancing depends on the ear of the performer. The step in this case was of a May-day character, consisting of alternate hops on each foot, pain and fright in the mean time compelling the dancer to let go his basket, which fell with a hideous crash, followed by the powerful aromas of squills and camphor, æther and assafœtida, while a flood of mingled hue meandered along the floor, the acids and alkalies hissing at each other like enraged serpents.

"In the name of mercy, woman," cried Jonas from the bar, "what's the meaning of the uproar, what's the matter?"

"It's life and death's the matter," replied Mrs. Hanway, finishing off her discipline with a smart cuff on the ear, which made this real pill-garlic conclude his pas seul with a pirouette.

"She harn't no right to ill-use me, that she harn't," he bellowed, "she an't my mother."

"Let the poor fellow alone," cried Jonas; "if so be he runs restive, his own master can lay the

whip into him a pretty deal smarter nor you can."

"A little villain," retorted Mrs. Hanway, "is people to go into the other world without their pills — and all through such a little divil as him?"

"The gentleman's dead and gone," returned Jonas, "and what signifies the pills—horse-balls would'n't 'a saved him."

"And let me tell ye, Mr. Hanway," retorted his spouse very sharply, "pills signifies a good deal when human lives is hanging like spiders' upon threads."

"That's true any how," said the unruffled Jonas, "and I'm thinking how many human beings 'll be cantering their last stages for want o' the draughts and mixtures you've been upsetting of."

"I've been the upsetter of nothin' that can't be made good again, thank God, nobody's deaths can be laid at my door,—and I wish every other little wicked vagabond could say as much, there's other folks understands the matera medicus as well as Old Formality."

"The matera medicus will be all stopped out o' my wages," blubbered the boy, "and may be my head pestled and mortared into the bargain. I should like to know who's to find me any character when I'm turned out, neck and crop, from Dr. Bellamy's."

"To be sure it's only fair and reasonable," said the considerate Jonas, "we should give the boy a trifle towards the physical damage."

"I shall give no such fiddlesticks," said Mrs. Hanway very tartly, "the sick patients is all I looks to;" so saying she stooped down, and carefully gathered up the labels from the medicinal wreck, the directions on which, she faithfully copied and appended to as many fresh phials, that she filled up with various draughts and mixtures of her own compounding, to the infinite relief of the dwarf who thus saw an infallible remedy for what had appeared a complication of incurable disasters. Promising faithfully to keep the secret, he set out cheerfully to deliver the nostrums at their respective destinations, and although one invalid

had to take pennyroyal three times a day, instead of sarsaparilla, and another had a draught of peppermint in lieu of bark, while a third swallowed camomile tea, in place of syrup of squills, —yet to the credit of Mrs. Hanway's practice the patients did neither better nor worse than if they had swallowed the identical medicines originally prescribed.

CHAPTER VIII.

"A fine pickle he'll put the house into; had he been master's own son, and a Christian Englishman, there could not have been more route than there is about this Creolian, as they call him."

THE WEST INDIAN.

ABOUT the same time that the doctor's boy departed from the Rabbits with his fresh cargo of medicine, the post-chaise entered the avenue which led to Tylney Hall and was immediately descried by the sharp grey eyes of Mrs. Deborah, the antiquated housekeeper. She instantly gave a cry, as shrill and broken as that of an upright pencil hopping across a slate, invoking the presence of, "Jere-miah!—Jere-miah!—Je-re-miah!" She had been naturally voluble, but a tryste as the Scotch call it, which she had held too faithfully for a

faithless swain, was said to have been the cause of an affection of the lungs, that she now entertained in lieu of an affection of the heart. Neglected love had brought on a neglected cold, which had terminated in an asthmatic shortness of breath, that made strange havoc with her enunciation. As well as printing can typify her defect, her soliloquy ran thus:—

"Well as I hope—to be saved by gemini—its gone to his stomach and a post-chaise is coming up—the avenue he must be put to bed—that comes of going off—without his ale and hung—beef run up and warm the bed—Lord send him well through it—don't forget to put the kettle on his feet—as usual must be bathed with a sack posset—God be praised sir—" she panted as the chaise drew up, "at seeing your honour—safe between me and Dr. Bellamy—we may keep your legs from going to your inside."

"You're running breast-high after a red herring," said the Baronet through the window, to the astonished Mistress Deborah, whose literal mind took the scampering after a Yarmouth bloater in

good earnest, and made her have a misgiving, that the gout had flown into her master's head.

"You're running breast-high, after a red herring," he repeated, "and must be whipped off. As for gout you may draw every cover I have in my inside and it will be a blank day after all,—but that's neither here nor there. As far as hunting goes I haven't had a single burst, let alone from Windmills Grange to the Rabbits, and then only to be in at the death of my own dear brother. You didn't kill him Dick, did ye?" he continued, abruptly addressing his huntsman, who presented an arm on one side of the chaise door.

"I'm d—d if we didn't," answered Dick, "and in forty minutes—he was chopt in a fuz."

"And this is his son," said Sir Mark, turning again to the housekeeper and pointing to the Creole as he alighted.

"As like Mr. Herbert," panted Deborah, "as two peas biled—in the same pot with his very nose —his eyes are exactly like his mouth—and his chin—and every other feature—he's brownish to be sure and the Tyrrels—is all fair—but a leetle

milk of roses—will remove a ship and a sea voyage—is apt to tan."

The brown face of the Creole at this speech assumed a tinge of scarlet, like poppies springing amongst ripe corn, but he contented himself with looking a box of dominoes at the housekeeper, and passed into the Hall.

"And now welcome to Tylney Hall," said the Baronet, taking and shaking his nephew's hand very heartily, "your home that is to be, you shall have a room of your own and a nag of your own, like Ringwood and Raby. Little Spitfire would be the very thing to carry you—and as to the dogs, you shall have any one you like, and the little single gun, provided you don't shoot the birds out of season. As Deborah says, you're the very image of my poor brother Herbert; and I'll be a father to you for his sake; so you musn't fret and take on so, or you'll fall off in your feed and get out of condition, and may be go after him yourself, and it's our duty in such a case to hold hard in time. But the boys will put you in heart better than I can. If you're for hunting or shoot-

ing—I mean after the funeral—you'll find Ringwood as up to every thing, as Nimrod; and if you're bookish, there's Raby knows every volume in the library inside and out, and can tell you the performances of any author you like. I wish he could ride as well as he reads; but I've remarked through life, that sedentary people never have a good seat. Now your poor father's gone, we must comfort ourselves by thinking of his straight-going principle through life, and trust you will follow in his line without skirting. And Deborah shall send up the tray, for we musn't forget nature's wants, and to my knowledge you haven't been to rack or manger the whole morning." By this time they had arrived at the dining-room, where the table had been already furnished, through the care of Mrs. Deborah, with a cold refection, in anticipation of some dozen guests, literally as hungry as hunters. The Creole, however, declined every thing that was offered, declaring that he felt neither hunger nor thirst.

"Come, come, my lad," said the good-natured Baronet, putting a cold pigeon on his nephew's

plate, "supposing your poor father to be looking down from above at this moment he wouldn't object to our taking our meals. To be sure some animals when they lose their mates or their dams will waste and pine away, but then they're brute beasts and know no better: but for Christians to starve themselves to death on account of the dead is flying in the face of the Bible. It's an opinion of mine that nature is nature, and if a man is not properly sensible of hunger and thirst he can't be sensible of sorrow, or grief, or anything else in the way of feelings. For my own part I think grieving is very apt to go to the stomach, for I remember I never felt so sharp-set in my life as at my uncle Raby's funeral, what with the very slow pace and the north-east wind, and not knowing whether it would be decorum to have the coach windows up," so saying, Sir Mark stuck his fork into a cold capon and was just beginning to illustrate his precept by practice, when Ringwood and Raby entered the room. They were both fine boys of thirteen and fourteen years of age, but considerably differing from each other in person and features. Ringwood

was tall, robust, and florid, with curling brown hair and full bold-looking dark eyes. He had a frank open manner, laughed often, talked much with a loud but pleasant voice. The complexion of Raby, the youngest, was pale, except when he was excited, and then his face flushed all over like a girl's, and his dark hazel eyes flashed and sparkled through their long lashes. There was nothing of sickliness. however, in the appearance; his skin was clear and transparent, the flesh firm, the lips fresh coloured, possibly the blackness of his hair made him look pale, though, in reality, he was merely fair. He was as well made as his brother, but slighter in figure, and he had a dash of reserve in his address, and a voice rather gentle and low that accorded with his own pursuits and amusements, which were of a nature somewhat less boisterous than the field sports of Ringwood. The dress of the latter, indeed, bore evidence of his recent occupation, hard riding through deep lanes having spotted him, "like a pard," from head to heel, for he had but just come home with the pad of the fox which had gone away in the morning from Windmills Grange.

"Here, boys" said Sir Mark, and leading the Creole towards his two sons, "I've brought home a new cousin to ye, so shake hands and take to him at once, he comes of your own blood, and I hope you feel it draw to him as I did. He's my own nephew by Herbert out of——but you can't remember your uncle Herbert, for he went abroad before you were born."

"Oh, yes," returned Ringwood eagerly, "and married a black woman, and she stabbed him, and Mrs. Hanway saw the scar when she laid out the body, and it bled whenever she said Indiana."

"The devil take Mrs. Hanway," said Sir Mark, "and whoever else opened on it, but only let a woman give tongue——"

"It was not a woman, papa," interrupted Ringwood; "I had it from unlucky Joe, the post-boy. I met him riding home one of his master's horses, and he pulled up very civilly to tell me the news about the Rabbits and uncle Herbert, and that you were to come home in the post-chaise."

"And was that all?" said Sir Mark hastily.

"Nothing else, papa, only I gave him a shilling

to drink"—here Ringwood laughed—" and he said he was the unluckiest chap in the world, and gave a sigh that would have turned round old Mudge's windmill."

" And not a word about Bedlamite ?" asked the Baronet, in some alarm,—" I'd promised him a crown to bring him safe home to the Hall."

" Then as sure as I'm alive," exclaimed Ringwood, " it *was* Bedlamite that I saw at a distance, galloping over the flats without a rider, only Dick offered to hold me a crown that it was no such thing, and he never bets, you know, except when he's as right as a trivet."

Had four carrion crows, at that moment, flapped at the window—had a spectral knacker's cart passed, or seemed to pass, across the room, or a warning hoof given three kicks at the door—had a dog's meat barrow flown out of the fire—had an ominous glanders of tallow guttered down the side of the candle, while a death-watch of one-horse power simultaneously struck up its tic doloreux, the Baronet could not have had a stronger presentiment of the death of his favourite. By the help of

his sons he pulled a grandsire peal of triple bobs on all the bells in the house, as well as the great one on the outside, which alarmed company to their dinner: at this extraordinary summons every domestic on the establishment, male or female, instantly put in an appearance, and in five minutes every man or boy that could ride was galloping off in the direction of the Flats.

CHAPTER IX.

" Woe worth the chase! Woe worth the day,
That cost thy life, my gallant grey!"

LADY OF THE LAKE.

AN hour had scarcely elapsed when the Baronet, at about his sixtieth visit to the front window, perceived the huntsman returning, like a discomfited captain of horse, with the remnant of his company at his heels. As they came at a footpace up the avenue, both horses and men hanging their heads, indicating the bodily and mental distress under which they laboured, Sir Mark, with a qualm as if the gout had at last reached his heart, abruptly turned his back on the doleful cavalcade, but unfortunately was confronted with a large painting of Bedlamite which hung on the opposite wall. "Ay," he ejaculated, apostrophising the

picture, "I was offered a cool two hundred for ye this very morning; but it isn't the guineas I care for," he added, with a quivering voice, for the anticipated catastrophe not only unhorsed but unmanned him. His next glance fell on an object no less painful, a noble silver cup and cover, the produce of a hunter's stakes, won by the same Bedlamite, but who was perhaps never to clear a hurdle again. Nor were these fears unfounded—Dick soon entered, stroking down his forelock with one hand, while the other brushed hastily across his eyes.

"It's a bad day's sport, your honour, if we had killed twenty foxes and never a vixen among 'em. Master Ringwood, I'm sorry to say your'n was the true bill, it was Bedlamite and nothing else we see'd galloping across the Flats. I'll warrant he heard the hounds when he bolted off, and so coming to the gravel-pits, your honour, for he never refused anythin' that looked like a leap, he went slap at 'em, clearing seven good yards on end if he springed an inch, and lighting after all on his feet. I never see such a sight in life since the crazy nursemaid that flinged herself out o' the

garret window. He was struck up all of a heap like, with his legs jammed into his body. You'd have thought his whirl bones and stifles was a coming out at his lines."

"There's amen then," sighed the Baronet, "to the best hunter in England, whether as a goer or a fencer—I'd rather have put down five hundred guineas—but it's too late now, the breath's gone—poor fellow I shall never see his like—d'ye mind Dick the purl he gave me at the ox-fence with the ditch on t'other side,—but he'll never put out my collar-bone again."

"And please your honour," answered Dick, "exceptin' a bit of a snivel for my own father, I never knew what crying was till this blessed day. If he had died in the field after a hard run, it would have been a different matter, but to break his neck down a gravel-pit and without a livin' soul on his back, is pitiful to think on. But I see Master Ringwood is beginnin' to wince, and so I'll say no more—but he'll be missed in the grooming to-morrow;" so saying, the huntsman gave what he would have called a cross between a nod and a

bow, and if in opposition to a horse-laugh, there be such a thing as a horse-sigh, with that very kind of respiration he quitted the apartment. In the mean time, Sir Mark had commenced pacing up and down the room, his custom when he was much excited, and was muttering to himself in broken sentences—

"Ay, ay, a black day sure enough—first poor Herbert, and then the grey horse—the best brother—and the best hunter that ever topped a fence. But misfortune, as they say, always shoots right and left with a double barrel. Here's Bedlamite on one hand with a broken neck, and yonder's my own brother laid out for burying—seven good yards into a gravel-pit; as for that Joe lucky or unlucky when I meet him, I'll ride over him—with his whirl bones and stifles coming out of his loins—God's will be done, but it's hard to bear—two deaths in one day—two deaths in one day."

To go back a little in our story while Hanway's post-chaise was preparing for the Baronet, the doomed postillion left the Rabbits mounted on the surviving post-horse belonging to his master and

leading Bedlamite by the rein. They had trotted however, barely a quarter of a mile, when whether he really heard any hounds according to Dick's surmise, or whether he disdained the companionship of a post-horse—the high spirited grey suddenly jerked the bridle out of Joe's hand, and dashed off across the heath at his very best pace. A few minutes sufficed to convince Joe of the futility of hunting a hunter on a spavined job-horse, and accordingly with his usual malediction on his luck and his birth, and another on all the grey horses in the world—he gave up the chase as one of those bad jobs for which he let himself out by the day, month, or year. Shortly after the mishap he encountered Ringwood Tyrrel, but could not muster courage enough to communicate what had happened, and subsequent to this meeting no person of the neighbourhood could remember having seen the familiar face of Unlucky Joe. The post-horse indeed, was found duly littered down in his own stall in his master's stable, but by whom he had been so replaced and attended was a profound mystery even to the ostler

and helps at the Inn. The well known despondency of Joe's character induced his fellow-servants to drag the horse-pond and to examine the well, but they found nothing that could lead any one to believe that such had been "his luck."

In the meantime the carcase of Bedlamite, as a morsel too noble for crows or hounds, was carefully brought home, in order to undergo a formal interment, which it subsequently received under a mound in the Park, and Mr. Richard Tablet was commissioned to erect a monument on the site. As the worthy master mason had no architectural invention of his own, he literally copied his obelisk, cherubim and all, from a certain one in the village church-yard, to the memory of Mrs. Eleanor Cobb. Some persons wondered that he did not even copy the *Resurgam* of the original, instead of *Requiescat in Pace;* but as the village sculptor always pronounced *pace* as one syllable, it seemed to him the aptest inscription in the world for a dead horse.

CHAPTER X.

"Men must not be poor; idleness is the root of all evil; the world's wide enough, let them bustle: fortune has taken the weak under her protection, but men of sense are left to their INDUSTRY."

THE BEAUX STRATAGEM.

IN due time the remains of Herbert Tyrrel were translated from the Rabbits to Tylney Hall, where they lay in state in the best bed-room,—the body being ceremoniously watched, day and night, by the domestics in rotation; although the guard was occasionally doubled, the females decidedly objecting to sit up all alone with a corpse, and particularly, as the dairy-maid remarked, "with a dead corpse which wasn't screwed down." In extenuation of such superstitious fancies, it must be remembered, that the lower classes of that day had not yet become

penny-wise through the medium of Penny Magazines, but were still absolutely pound foolish on the subject of ghosts, and goblins; nor was a country milk-maid then aware, as doubtless she is now, of the absurdity of a gentleman, of sedentary habits through life, taking to walk after death, like a two-penny postman.

Besides, the chamber in question was actually hung with some of the goblin tapestry of tradition. According to the domestic chronicle, the Tyrrels were descended from that same Sir Walter Tyrrel, whose arrow, aimed at a deer, slew the royal Rufus in the New Forest. The legend darkly hinted, that it was no chance shot that had glanced from a king's stag to a king's heart, and indeed the immediate flight of the regicide, and the apparently preconcerted facility of his escape into France, seemed to justify the inference. At any rate, it was matter of popular belief, that the best bed room had been haunted ever since by the apparition of a crowned king, with a shaft sticking in his bosom; and by way of collateral evidence, certain huge antlers in the hall

were said to have been the very identical horns of the stag that was missed.

In the mean time, the Baronet received daily and hourly cards or calls of condolence from persons, some of whom he knew by sight, some by name, and some by neither. If death is frequently guilty of severing relations and friends, he is as often the occasion of bringing them together; for, at a demise, many branches of a family meet and congregate, who but for such an occasion would most probably have never encountered for years. Then it is that strange aunts, uncles, cousins, and demi cousins, gather together as if from the ends of the earth, to mourn, or pretend to mourn, over a person they would not have known by sight, and with whom they have never been on visiting terms, till a black edged card informed them that he was at home in his coffin. Thus on the fifth night, at the unusual hour of ten, the Baronet was favoured with a huge card announcing the arrival of Mr. Twigg, to sympathize as a branch in the sorrow of the Tyrrels; and accordingly that person soon

made his entrance, which, to Sir Mark, was literally "a gentleman's first appearance in the character of the Stranger." After a few bows and compliments he proceeded thus:—

"I hope I know better, Sir Mark Tyrrel, Baronet, than to intrude at untimely hours, but as the saying is, necessity has no law. It seems very odd that a man of my property can't have a bed at an inn, but so it is, though I offered the Green Man a guinea for one, and that's sixteen shillings more than ever I paid in my life. It's not very pleasant for a man with money to go a begging for a night's board and lodging; but before your hospitality opens an account with me, let's know, says you, who and what you are."

"To tell the truth," replied the Baronet, "you have really the advantage of me: though I hope you won't take it as any thing personal: but there are so many strange faces in the field, I was never so thrown out in my life. It's very strange, Sir, but though I can call over fifty couple of hounds at sight, and have every one of 'em at the tip of my tongue, and some of them not the easiest to

remember,—I say, Sir, it's very strange, but of all the ladies and gentlemen that have been in at the death of my poor brother, I can't give their own names to one half of the pack, upon my soul I can't, dog or bitch."

"Nothing more likely," returned the visitor, "and particularly when there's property in the case, and another name goes along with it. You must know, I got five thousand consols from my old master for changing Tyrrel into Twigg: not a bad bargain, says you, and indeed I'd have taken a whole firm on the same terms; otherwise I have as good a right as any one to have a stag's head on my gold seal, though I've took a bee for my crest in preference, as barring the five thousand, all my honey and wax through life, as I may say, has been of my own making. But that's neither here nor there, as regards my right to roost on your family tree. I presume, Sir Mark Tyrrel, Baronet, you've heard of my grandfather, old Theophilus Tyrrel, that died and left nothing to nobody?"

"To be sure I have," said the Baronet, "he was cleaned out on the turf. I remember I was at his

funeral, and so were you, Sir; I thought I had got a view of you somewhere, though I could not hit it off. Let me see—my aunt's mother, and your mother's aunt—but I shall only founder if I attempt to go through the pedigree. Mr. Twigg, you are heartily welcome to Tylney Hall."

"I beg to say I am much obliged, Sir Mark, for all favours; and must solicit a continuation of the same for my horse, and my shay, and my servant. By the by, if you'd like my shay to go with the line of carriages, at the burying, I shall feel happy to oblige: I brought my own man down with me, and new blacked him on purpose. I assure you it's a very spruce sort of a set-out—bran new only a month ago—yellow picked out with red, and lots of bright brass bees on the harness. A bit of a flourish, says you, for one that has known afore now what drawing a truck is. But where's the harm o' that? I've riz like a rocket at Vauxhall by the exertion of my own hands, and have as good a right to leave off with a bit of a flash."

"Mr. Twigg," said the Baronet, "there's no disgrace in a humble set out in life, provided we're

well up at the end: in this world, you know, we can't all be equally mounted; one begins his course on a plate horse, may be, another on a cock-tail, and another on a galloway; but if by straight riding, and so forth, a man's in a good place at the finish, why it's to his honour and credit, and let him have the brush or the pad, as may be, gentle or simple."

"My own sentiments to a T," exclaimed the delighted Twigg. "We ought never to forget what we sprung from, as I said the very last Show to the Lord Mayor, who begun life as a common waiter at a tavern. My Lord Mayor, says I, while all the steeples was a-pealing, them's bigger bells than used to ring for you at the King's Head. To be sure the Sword-Bearer took me to task, but I gave him his change. I wonder, says I, a man can be so uppish at riding behind six horses, that to my knowledge has been drawn by eight, and that's when he first came up to London in the Bath waggon."

"I believe," said Sir Mark, "you were not intimate with my poor brother Herbert—indeed he

was so long abroad, I can hardly say I was intimate with him myself."

"Never set eyes on him," said Twigg, "but for all that, am anxious to treat his remains with strict assiduity and attention, and indeed any connection in the same line; and that's more than I could say twenty years ago. It was all up hill then, and living from hand to mouth, and even my own three first children, God forgive me, I could not afford to fret for; but now I'm a man of property, I feel for every body, and was at a neighbour's funeral only last week. He died worth a plum, if he was worth a penny, and kept his carriage. I remember his pole though, before he had a pair of horses to it, and good reason why, for it was nothing but a barber's."

The entrance of supper put an end to these excursions of memory up the stream of time, a stream which Twigg was fond of ascending against the tide, with the wilfulness and velocity of a steamer. With all his seeming lowliness, he had at bottom a deal of the devil's "darling sin," "the pride that apes humility." Out of nothing, it

is written, God created the world, and as out of nothing Twigg had created some thirty thousand pounds, he considered himself as a sort of Deity, who had wrought a miracle. In short he liked to insist on his own littleness originally, in order to enhance his apparent magnitude when viewed afterwards through the solar microscope of success; a flea as it were magnified by thirty thousand into the proportions of an elephant. To do him justice, he had made his way by industry and ingenuity, and was entitled to blazon them if he liked as his supporters, instead of "two salvages proper," or a brace of griffins: but he did not sufficiently consider whether a retired barber might choose to be stirred up with his own pole, or an ex-waiter to have it always rung in his ears, that he had been brought up on Bell's system.

"Very fine lads upon my word," he remarked, as Ringwood, Raby, and the Creole, took their seats at the supper table, "and it will be their own faults if they don't shine in life. When I was of your age, young gentlemen," he added,

addressing the boys, "I used to run of errands and black shoes, and walked to London with only a shilling in my pocket, to seek my fortune; and now here I am, a man of property, and a common-council man besides. Not a bad example, Sir Mark Tyrrel, Baronet, to be set before the rising generation. I often think my own life and rise in the world would make as good a history for young persons as Dick Whittington's, one of the best classical works, by the by, in the English language."

"But it might be better for all that," remarked Ringwood, with a look of appeal towards his father, "I mean as to worrying the rats, for if the Black King gave such heaps of gold for a cat, what wouldn't he have come down for a keen ferret or two, crossed with the pole-cat, and a bull-terrier like Whop, and as good at all vermin by land or water?"

"To be sure," answered the Baronet, "Whop is worth his weight in gold—always goes at the head, and you may chew his foot like tobacco before he'll let go, whether of a badger or a

christian. I remember the grip he took of Black Will the poacher,"—but before the story could come off, the supper party was suddenly alarmed by a bustle over head, followed by shrieks so shrill and incessant, from the chamber of death, that for a long minute each individual stared at his neighbour as mute and motionless as a stag at gaze. At last, snatching a candle, the Baronet rushed up the staircase, followed by the others, Twigg at every step, as became a man of property, bellowing out, "Thieves! thieves! thieves!"

CHAPTER XI.

"Noe doubt manie livinge persones, both menne and womenne, have seen ye Deville bodilie, beinge like unto one hugeous black gote, with hornis and taile."

KING JAMES I.

ON entering the bedchamber, the screaming was found to proceed from the dairy-maid and laundry-woman. Both had thrown their aprons over their heads, and each had backed her chair against the opposite wall, through which she seemed endeavouring to force it by convulsive efforts of her legs and feet, while with desperate energy her hands clung to the mahogany elbows, as if in resistance of human or super-human abduction.

"Skreek, Peggy, skreek," panted the laundress, her own breath being just exhausted by a sostenuto on D in alt, and accordingly Peggy shrieked

with a shrillness and perseverance, that even a stuck pig would have stuck at; and when her voice failed, the other took it up, like the celebrated echo at Killarney, which always outdoes its original.

"In the name of God, wench," said the Baronet, seizing the dairy-maid by the arm, "what game's afoot to raise such a view halloo?" but before she could compose a sentence, fear distributed it all into pie, as a printer would say, by shaking every word and syllable from each other.

"In the name of the devil," cried Twigg, carefully imitating the Baronet's movements, by seizing the arm of the laundress, "what's the meaning of this rumpus?" but the two maidens continued to squall against each other as if for a wager; and when Sir Mark, and then Twigg, successively plucked away an apron, they saw eyes resolutely screwed together, as if they were never again to unclose, and mouths as obstinately wide open as if they were never more to shut.

"Confound your squalling," cried Sir Mark, "it's like hawk and hern, striving which shall go

highest—you could not yell more if you'd unkenneled the devil himself."

"Don't neame his neame," said the terrified Peggy, with a shuddering groan like the low neighing of a horse, "he's been in this very room—only a minute ago, and mayn't be no great ways off this blessed moment."

"I'll take my gospel oath on it," asseverated the laundress, "on my own bended knees—with two horns and a tail—and as soot black as the chimbley back. One thing I'm sure on," she added sobbing, "he's none o' my raising. God forgive me for sayin so, but I don't know my prayers well enough to say 'em back'ards. As for sin and wickedness, except lookin in on a cousin or so on Sundays, instead of going to church, or may be the vally of a pint of strong ale, or being a little charitable with the torn linen, or on a chance time lending the master's shirts to be dirtied out by the footman—"

"Or obliging a poor man's pig with a little skim milk" whimpered Peggy, "or a lone widow's hen with a sitting o' eggs—the Lord be near us if we're to go to the pit for such as that!"

"I'm sure I don't know why he should come to *hus*," blubbered the laundress, "any more nor the cook and butler."

"A likely story truly," said the Baronet getting impatient, "what the devil should the devil come here for? the brace of you isn't worth his fetching. He'd hardly go a bat-fowling for a couple of screech-owls."

"Saving your honour's presence," said Peggy, with a reverential curtsey, "your honour in course knows best. It's like enough the Wicked One don't demean himself to come arter the likes of us poor sarvants, when there's a dead gentleman in the room. For sartin he did antic about the coffin very fearsome, and seemed to make much on it—but the Lord be near us," she ejaculated in a loud whisper, "there he is again,"—an announcement the laundress took so promptly, that before he was aware she had clutched Twigg by the arm, and was hurrying him down stairs three steps at a time, to the imminent risk of his neck. In fact, following the direction of Peggy's eyes, Sir Mark plainly perceived a black head peeping from behind a

bed-curtain, an apparition so totally unexpected, that for some moments, the spectators were all as much confounded as if the Deuce had actually turned up. At last, uttering a word of recognition, the young Creole advanced boldly to the bed, and dragging forward a black footman in a new suit of sables, began to kick and cuff him with a freedom which does not yet belong to this land of liberty. Black or white, Sir Mark could not endure to see a man so buffeted by a stripling, and he began to interfere with some sternness, when the poor Negro himself interceded for the offender, with an excuse more worthy of a Christian than a Heathen.

"Nebber mind," he said, "me berry glad to see him face. When Massa Walter a piccaninny, him bite and scratch Pompey worse dan dat, nebber mind. Him larrup Pompey ebbery day of him life in San Kitts. Gorramity bless him! me 'long to Massa Twigg now Sare, but beforetimes me 'long to Massa Curnel Tyrrell—Gorramity bless him, too. Oh ki!"

It appeared on explanation, that Pompey had formerly been a black unit in the West Indian

establishment of the deceased, but after passing through various hands, he had come into the possession of our citizen, through a will and testament by which Fortune had knocked down to him the auction-like lot of five thousand pounds, the sirname of Twigg, and a Nigger. The affectionate African having learnt below stairs the pedigree of the corse, and taking advantage of a quiet round game, set on foot in the kitchen by the undertaker's man, had crept stealthily to indulge in a last look, and a last "talkee talkee" with his old master, to the signal discomfiture of his new one.

"It's very hard," said the latter, as he re-entered the room, "that a man like me can't have a black footman, as well as other people of property, without being deviled down strange stairs by a long-legged washerwoman, into the very kitchen, among common domestic menial servants, coachman, and footman, and what not—not quite the thing for one of the Livery. Pompey, you sir, mind your manners, and don't stand grinning at Sir Mark Tyrrell, Baronet. Make yourself scarce! I'm very sorry, I'm sure, to cause such a kick up in a respectable

house, but it's all through that d——d black man; and, says you, the Green Man too, for not giving me a bed."

"Take it easy," said the Baronet, "and overlook the black—my own jades were in fault to cackle so over a mare's nest. To be sure, if the wenches had sworn to a crowned king in a green hunting coat, with a horn, and so forth, and a broad arrow in the right place, I don't know if I'd have gone into the room myself without a little craning—but I'll tell you that story at our next meet, or there'll be but a cold scent on the supper table. As it is our pullets won't be a bit hotter for having been deviled. But the devil has little to do with the like of *him*," he added, approaching the coffin; and removing the lid, he first patted the marble cheek, and then kissed the brow of the corpse.

"As I may some day be sheriff," said Twigg to himself, as in a dramatic aside, "it's as well to accustom myself to death wherever I can," and accordingly he placed himself on the opposite side of the coffin, and began to look on its tenant so earnestly, as to persuade the good-natured Baronet

that he was one of the most feeling and sympathising friends he had ever known.

A burst of grief, however, from the Creole, at the sight of his parent, interrupted their very different meditations, and considerately replacing the coffin lid, the uncle led his nephew down to the supper table, followed readily by Twigg, whose stomach had come to a proper sense of the emptiness of this life. He did not indeed omit dropping something about poor man's sauce, having been a poor man himself, and he appropriately ate like one who had known what it is to want a meal, washing it down afterwards like a man who had known what it is to want four glasses of brandy and water.

"I am an early bird," he said, towards one o'clock, "and must go to roost. Sir Mark Tyrrell, Baronet, I beg to say good night, and the same to the young gentlemen, and hope they will sedulously cultivate early habits, as the unvarying means of getting up in the world. For my part, I'm never called, but wake at six, as regular as clock-work — but, says you, a man knows

how to rise from his bed, that has risen from nothing." So saying, he seized his candlestick, and the party separated for the night.

On the morrow the tomb closed over the remains of Herbert Tyrrell. As the old ballad laconically says, "the knell was rung, and the dirge was sung," and the mourners departed; not a little disappointed at his leaving only some personal property, and many were much scandalized, that even this was bequeathed to a natural son, the offspring of a woman of colour, and most likely, but half a Christian. Twigg, however, protested "that a man of his means did not need to go about gaping after godsends and windfalls, and for his own part, he must say, what with a sniff of country air, and a relax from business, and the pleasant prospects, and the good cheer, and a hearty welcome, and above all, the very polite, civil urbanity of Sir Mark Tyrrell, Baronet, he must say, allowing for the melancholy occasion, and the ruck in his back from skurrying down such a noble flight of stairs, it was altogether one of the pleasantest days he had ever spent since he was independent."

CHAPTER XII.

Look here upon this picture, and on this;
The counterfeit presentment of two brothers.

HAMLET.

——————————— Give me leave
To enjoy myself: that place that does contain
My books, the best companions, is to me
A glorious court, where hourly I converse
With the old sages and philosophers.

THE ELDER BROTHER.

TIME, the soother of all sorrows, was not slow in healing the wound inflicted on the Baronet, by his brother's death. By degrees he resumed the sports of the field, and especially the chace, into which Ringwood entered with such zeal, that not contented with doing as his father did before him, he sometimes contrived to leave the old gentleman behind him, to the infinite delight of Dick the

huntsman, to whom, as Filch says, "he was indebted for his edication." The irreverend Dick Doughty, indeed, took far more pleasure in his pupil than fell to the lot of the Reverend Dr. Burdock, who had undertaken to prepare the young gentlemen for the University. The reason might be that in Dick's equestrian school, Ringwood always did his own exercise, whereas in the Doctor's classical academy, it was too often done for him by others. Dick reported his scholar as d—d fast, and one as would go at any thing." The Doctor that he was "deplorably slow, and did not take to any one branch of learning." The huntsman swore that he had "the best seat on a horse, and the lightest hand, in the whole country: and he looked on the next hunter's plate as good as booked to him." The pedagogue lamented to say, he had "the worst head for the classics and mathematics he ever knew, and indeed he should not be very much surprised if he got plucked at College." Even the partial parent confessed at times, that Ringwood deserved "to be well horsed for learning so little," at the same time taking liberal

care to horse him well, on thorough bred ones, because he hunted so much. This censure, however, never escaped Sir Mark, but when he was a little splenetic, under a fit of the gout. Indeed, on one occasion, when the sporting Vicar, Dr. Cobb, thought proper to sound the depths of the young 'Squire's Latin, as they waited the find together by the cover side, the Baronet took it in some dudgeon; though he said nothing, till in running Ringwood cleared a stiff fence, which no one else would take, whereupon Sir Mark pulled his horse alongside the hack of the Doctor, shouting out, with all the extasy of a fox-hunter, "there Parson; damme, could Cicero do that!!"

The Creole, also, or St. Kitts, as he was familiarly nick-named by Sir Mark, from the place of his birth, continued likewise to grow in favour with his uncle, through the skill he displayed in hunting, fowling, and fishing; but with a deep chagrin, amounting at times to bitterness, the Baronet observed the decided aversion of Raby to all such pursuits. At the age of sixteen, he could neither clear a hurdle, bring down his

bird, nor throw a fly for a trout; in short he was awfully backward in his sporting. Thanks to the reducing system of Dr. Bellamy, who always found in "the lowest depth, a lower still," he had undergone in his boyhood a long and languishing illness, which had rendered him incapable of bodily exertion: being thus thrown on his own resources for amusement, he had taken eagerly to reading, and an extensive old family library supplied this appetite with plenty, as well as variety of food. His especial favourites, however, were the old English dramatists and poets, whose most golden passages he got by heart, or rather by soul. Absorbed in such studies, in which neither his father nor his brother conld sympathize, he became a sort of domestic anchorite, worshipping his own idols in secret, with the more fervour, because of the persecution he endured on their account. At last, through the good nursing of Mistress Deborah, who wisely thought and said, "that a growing young—gentleman couldn't get fat—on physic and a fig—for Dr. Bellamy"—Raby recovered his strength and flesh; but he neglected the stable

and dog-kennel as much as ever. His passion for letters had now overgrown and choked his taste for the chase, if he ever had any, and probably he felt it too late to begin to ground himself in the mere A B C of those rural arts and sciences in which his own contemporaries were already proficients. "Ignorance is bliss," where knowledge is only to be obtained by the scholar's going, looby-like, to a school for adults. Besides, sickness and personal suffering had subdued his nature into unusual gentleness, and with a tone of feeling of extreme tenderness, indeed an almost over-wrought sensibility, he had become sensitively abhorrent of man's inflictions on the lower animals, holding us strictly bound, according to the poet,—

> "Never to blend our pleasure or our pride
> With sorrow of the meanest thing that feels."

"For my part," said Sir Mark, "I can't think where the boy got it—his dear mother, God rest her soul! was the best horse-woman in Christendom:—many a time the knife's been offered to her to take say. But tell Raby of a stag of ten tines, and he'll open about Shakspeare, and the big

round tears running down his innocent nose, as if it wasn't the nature of the beast to cry like a human creature. Not that I wouldn't as soon as any one cry hark to humanity, only it's just not the time for it, when Tiger and Terrible are hanging at his throat. Pity's all very well provided it's the genuine milk of human kindness, but it's often too like the London made stuff, nothing but chalk and water. Why zounds, boy, if you were even training for the church, there'd be no harm in your having a gallop with the hounds; I remember the time Dr. Cobb never missed a meet of the hunt, and he often comes now to see them find, though he's grown too fat and corpulent to enjoy a burst."

To such remarks from his father, Raby made little or no reply; but when Ringwood ventured a sneer at what he called the milksop amusements of his brother, the latter always retorted with much spirit and point on certain deficiencies, which would have subjected the young Nimrod to the old birch rod of Dr. Busby. These little differences between the brothers might generally be

regarded as merely boxing with the muffles on; but as even this kind of sparring is attended with some danger to the temper, it occasionally ended in a quarrel in earnest. This result was always aggravated by the injudicious interference of the Creole, which only served to protract a battle into a campaign, as a duel between two game cocks is sometimes prolonged by the untimely interposition of a third.

For example, — Gingerpile is down on the broad of his back, with his head awry, and looking like trussing. He gapes wider than a young blackbird before breakfast, and his bloody comb resembles a bit of underdone steak, when the cook says, "it's only the gravy." Red stands staggering and swaggering over him, mustering all the breath in his crop for a crow, but the crop has had a spur through it, yet that he is the victor he knows, and looks knowingly with only one eye on the vanquished. All the Poultry to Chick Lane is the odds on him, when suddenly Blackhackle unfairly strikes in, on his blind side, and with a flirt, giving Red a fair back fall, enables

Gingerpile to get second wind, and flare up again like a phœnix. Accordingly, he scrambles on his legs, and after a little game of see-saw between his head and tail, he accomplishes a roupy chuckle, which, unlike cockcrows in general, seems to recal the ghost of Red, who rises and walks. At it they go again: but after exchanging a bushel of pecks, at last faintly billing like pigeons, they feebly lay their necks by turns over each other, as if hate had degenerated into love. Gingerpile is now, however, the freshest, and makes a rush at Red, who ducks his head to avoid punishment, and attempts to walk away between the other's legs, when he gets such a spur right and left, that he is fain to tuck his legs under him, and lay his breast to the earth, as if brooding a batch of chickens. He is evidently done out of the championship, or at least he would be done out of it, but for the abominable Blackhackle, who, like the king-making Earl of Warwick, takes fresh offence at the sovereignty of Gingerpile. With a dig somewhere near the root of the tail feathers, he sends him to wriggle about the yard till Red is ready for another round; and

in this manner the contest is da-capo'd from hour to hour, and from day to day, to the perpetual disquiet of the yard.

Even thus did the Creole revive a drooping argument by some unseasonable fling at its antagonist, which he was well enabled to do by the diversity of his own taste, for he frequented the covers which lodged authors, as well as those that harboured foxes. Accordingly these discussions, by the help of Jack-of-both-sides, generally ended as drawn games, which were to be renewed between the parties at the first opportunity. It was impossible, however, that such subjects of dispute should remain in abeyance so long, without engendering some degree of asperity, so that sharp words and sudden heat sometimes arose on questions which had but a remote reference, if any, to literature or sporting.

Possibly the Creole, who did not agree over well with either of his cousins, was not displeased secretly to see them differ a little with each other, especially as it helped to avenge a personal grudge which he entertained against both. Boys in the

reckless levity of their mirth, have a proneness to satire, which is apt to select personal defects or peculiarities as butts for raillery and ridicule. Prompted by this spirit, Ringwood and Raby, in common with their schoolfellows, had set their wits against the Creole, or rather his complexion, a subject on which he was as sensitive, as if he had been without a skin. A pitched battle with each of the "pale faces" was the consequence, wherein, to adopt the language of coursing, Creole beat Raby, and Ringwood beat Creole; Ringwood thereby establishing his right to use the obnoxious nickname of Gip, (the short for Gipsy,) which had given rise to the contest. It must be remembered, that St. Kitts descended by his mother's side at least from those "souls of fire and children of the sun, with whom revenge is virtue." It is highly probable, therefore, that his defeat and the offence of the provoking soubriquet rankled in his mind long after its origin; but he buried it like Zanga, in his "heart of hearts," for his outward bearing to his cousins was frank and open, and accompanied with much profession and actual

appearance of affection. Nevertheless, it never amounted to that absolute cordiality which obtains between natures thoroughly congenial. There is a mysterious instinct within us, which unerringly guides the soul in its selection of a true friend, and neither with Ringwood, nor with Raby, did this secret impulse point towards the West Indian, as one to be "grappled to the heart with hooks of steel."

"I would thank you, Ringwood," said the Creole one day to his elder cousin, who had just been Gip-ing him, "I would thank you, Ringwood, to remember that I have a Christian name, and a sirname, as well as yourself. I have put up hitherto, with the contemptuous syllable you have been pleased to call me by, as a boyish impertinence; but now that we are on the eve of going to college together, I must inform you that I shall look for a more suitable mode of address. I shall certainly consider myself entitled to be called Walter, or at least any legitimate abbreviation of that name you may choose to adopt."

"I have never disputed the *legitimacy* of your Walter, or your Tyrrel either, with or without abbreviations," retorted Ringwood, whose temper was a little turned, by his having been thrown out in hunting. "And as we are going to college, where of course you will give me the go by, I intended to drop Gip of my own accord, as it might not come well, hereafter, from plain Ringwood Tyrrel to an LL.D."

"If your emphasis on legitimate," returned the Creole hastily, "implies any unworthy allusion to my birth, I will only remind you, that the imputation touches your uncle, as well as my father, and leave your heart to its own reproach."

"I meant no offence, St. Kitts," said the really good hearted Ringwood, "and am sorry if you've been wrung—come, shake hands, and burn the stud book! As it touches you on the raw, if I call you Gip again, I give you leave to call me Flincher in the face of the whole field."

The Creole took the hand that was proffered, or rather he suffered his own to be taken by it,

for as the grammatical Dr. Burdock would have observed, to shake hands was with one a verb active, and with the other a verb passive. And thus ended a quarrel, that Ringwood instantly forgot, but the sting of which his cousin preserved, and hermetically sealed up like a serpent in spirits.

The month following this skirmish, the trio departed for Oxford, a change of much indifference to the Creole, of considerable gratification to Raby, and prodigious vexation to Ringwood; when he discovered that the rules and regulations of Alma Mater were very much the same in spirit with the notice so commonly set forth at the gates of the public gardens round the Metropolis; namely

"NO DOGS OR PATTENS ADMITTED."

CHAPTER XIII.

"Since I mounted on the towers of pride and ambition, my soul has been invaded by a thousand miseries, and a thousand toils, and four thousand disquiets."

SANCHO PANZA.

BEFORE the young Collegians had been gone a week, Sir Mark began to feel very dull and lonely, especially as his gout had set in again with a rigour which threatened to outlast the remainder of the hunting season. Laid up in an easy chair, with his two supporters couchant instead of rampant, he had many long hour for reflection; even his friends who wore the button of the hunt, being a little apt to neglect him, when he was incapable of a run, regarding him in much the same light as a fox who had been lamed in a gin.

In this dilemma, his thoughts naturally looked forward to the period when age and infirmity might withdraw him permanently from the field, and he began to calculate on his future situation with all its contingencies.

"In the course of nature," he soliloquized, "the short breath of poor broken-winded old Deborah won't last out many winters, though she has been taken up from hard work, but age wont be denied. She has been a good one in her day, and I shall have a heavy miss of her when it comes to a mort —for let alone her capital tooling of the whole team of servants, she's the only hedge I have against Dr. Bellamy, who's too fond of shortening my feeds, and taking me off hard meat to put me upon mashes. God knows what I shall do when I come to be gouty for good, or may be bedridden and dead-foundered towards the finish. It wouldn't be a bad cast to scribble a line or two to sister Kate, and get her to run a trail to Tylney Hall to take the lead of the house like, and be the whipper-in to the maids. Besides, the boys by and by will be leaving college, and will want to be pair-

ing for life, and to be looking out among the young misses, but the devil a young lady will come to the Hall now there's no females to visit. Kate is a gentlewoman, and well bred, though I've known even a raw-boned crib-biting old jade of an aunt, with a devilish pain in her temper, a good deal backed by young girls, provided there were some handsome blood-like looking colts of nephews in the same stable. By the by, I wonder that Grace Rivers never shows now at the Hall, where she was always first favourite. D—n the Paragon filly for dying, for I meant to have named her after Grace. Egad I should like to see Ringwood riding a steeple-chase to Tylney church, and her little white hand to go to the winner. The old Justice's lands join ours, and it would be a pretty property to include through a marriage in a ring-fence."

In conformity with these politic calculations, in which he considered he had made up anything but a bad book, the Baronet immediately rang for pen and ink, and concocted a letter to his sister in the north, who had married a Scotch laird, and was

recently become a widow; and what was still better in his estimation, a widow without either colt or filly to run whinnying after her heels. The epistle, after a page of awkward, but honest condolence, conveyed a pressing invitation to the relict to spend the remainder of her days at Tylney Hall, and it concluded by requesting an immediate answer, hoping "she would not sit in the saddle craning over the Border, but charge it at once, and return at her best pace to the seat of her ancestors."

In the meantime the Baronet was not displeased to learn from Dr. Bellamy, that a family had just come to settle in the vicinity, whose visits promised to dissipate his ennui, as they declared themselves to be distant relatives of the Tyrrels.

"I have been honoured with the compliment," said the Doctor, "of being called in to the whole family the very day after their arrival. As they had removed from the metropolis to the country, by way of precaution against the sudden change of air, I had the gratification of prescribing an alterative for them all round. Mr. Twigg, indeed,

did me the favour to object to taking anything I recommended, saying, that a man who had met with his changes in life needn't care for changes of air; but I had the pleasure of persuading him to a pill over night, and a draught in the morning. If I recollect right, I had the happiness of riding in the same mourning coach with him at the interment of the lamented Colonel Tyrrel; and really found the gentleman very agreeable and pleasant."

In fact, Twigg, at the burial in question, had become so enamoured of a country life, that he made up his mind to retire some day from civic dignity into "rural felicity,"

"With a cow, and a pig, and a barndoor and all,"

A plan he now put in execution by purchasing, as advertised, "a large roomy family house, with an extensive walled garden well stocked, and about fifty acres of land, arable and pasture." Since his last visit to the country he had almost doubled his capital, and had served the office of Sheriff of London; but as that city seemed in no hurry to make him its Lord Mayor, he determined to withdraw like Cincinnatus to a Sabine farm.

In choosing the locality of this pastoral retreat, he was guided by three suggestions; which, like the witches in Macbeth, severally addressed themselves to his ambition. The first saluting him as Timothy Twigg, Esquire, hinted that a friendly intercourse with the Baronet would be the means of introducing him to the best society in the county—no slight advantage to a man who, in any other shire, would have been "alike unknowing and unknown." The second hailing him as Mr. Sheriff Twigg, reminded him that there were such things as Sheriffs of counties; and that there was no earthly reason why one office shouldn't lead to the other. And the third dubbing him at once, whispered that the daughter of Sir Timothy Twigg, Knight, and the son of Sir Mark Tyrrel, Baronet, would be as twelvepence to a shilling with regard to rank.

With these views the prosperous citizen purchased the desirable mansion called Hollington House, a name he thought proper to alter to The Hive. In the same spirit he removed the two eagles volant that flanked the great gates, and sub-

stituted a pair of stone bee-hives, at the same time favouring the sun-dial in the fore court with a motto from Dr. Watts, concerning the little busy insect he had chosen for his crest. A Latin inscription on an ornamental obelisk in the garden was replaced by a maxim from Poor Richard's Almanack, and the octagon summer-house was labelled with eight out of the twelve Golden Rules. Indeed he indulged in this whim so profusely that the parish wags took the hint, and again stood godfathers for the house, to which they gave the appropriate name of "the House of Industry."

This alias somewhat tried the temper of Mr. Twigg, who thought it very hard that a man of his property could not give what name he chose to his own house, as well as to his own child; but his prospect of "rural felicity" began already to be obscured by clouds from other quarters. An ironmonger does not necessarily acquire a knowledge of agriculture, because ploughshares spades and sickles are amongst his items of commerce; and when our retired hardwareman turned gentleman-farmer, he found to his infinite annoyance

that it required a previous apprenticeship as much as any other business. Ignorance and obstinacy however are as closely united as the Siamese Twins, and even in farming, Mr. Twigg chose to go his own road, which, as he walked in the dark, was pretty sure to be the wrong one. He had been used to activity he said, all his life, and could not sit down with his hands before him and look on. He consequently interfered so pertinaciously in every rural or domestic act, as to realize the countryman's description of Garrick, "a little brisk man, as busy as a bee, and on the stage the whole time."

He had notified to the Baronet, through Dr. Bellamy, that "as gout prevented the honour of a call at the Hive, he intended to wave ceremony and drop in himself at the Hall, to receive congratulations and cetera on coming to his landed estate." Day passed after day, however, without bringing the promised visitor, till at last one fine morning Sir Mark dissolved the Doctor's injunction against horse exercise, and mounting his sorrel hack rode leisurely over to Hollington—"to see,"

as he said, "whether the whole swarm had not suffocated themselves in housewarming the Hive."

"Egad," ejaculated Sir Mark, as he looked up at the emblems which superseded the old eagles, "his bees are no drones. It's well old Sir Theodore Bowles has got the dust in his eyes, or a sight like this would raise his hackle. As I live, too, there's Pompey the Great, in sky blue and orange, coming to open the gate. Well, Beelzebub, is your master at kennel, or on the pad, hey?"

"Maybe iss, maybe no, Sar," answered Pompey with a low bow. "Walk dis way, Sar," he continued to the Baronet, who for lack of attendance was fain to cast his horse's bridle over the gnomon of the sun-dial; "walk dis way, Sar," ushering the visitor towards the drawing-room, and half opening the door, but which he suddenly slammed to again at a signal from a lady within, of whom Sir Mark got a glimpse sufficient to show that she was busy with several new hats and some yards of gold lace.

"Sar, walk dis way," repeated Pompey, turning sharp off to the left, "and pray sit down in de

billard-room," at the same time throwing the door wide open; but the Baronet again retreated of his own accord, on beholding a young lady partly "uncased," as he would have called it, who, in company with her dressmaker, was too busily engaged over a series of silk dresses which covered the billiard table, to notice the intrusion.

"Beg pardon, Sar, walk *dis* way," reiterated the discomfited Pompey, wheeling off to the right, "nobody is in de parlour;" but the door of this Bluebeard chamber was locked on the inside, and whatever mysterious personage was in the room, he or she had evidently some private reason for remaining incog.

In this dilemma poor Pompey left the Baronet standing in the middle of the hall, while he popped his puzzled head in at the door of the library to ask massa if he was at home, the only answer to which was an audible imprecation on his black face, and a command to show every one into the drawing-room.

"Please, massa, dere is no room at home but de kitchen," whispered Pompey, cautiously reducing

the aperture of the door to a crack, "and it's Massa Baronet Tyrrel:" an announcement which operated so electrically on the master of the house that it drew him from his den like a badger. In fact, he rushed out in his shirt sleeves and an apron, and leading Sir Mark with a warm welcome into the library, offered him the only chair that was vacant, in the meantime apologizing profusely for the state of the sanctorum and his own appearance.

"It's very ridiculous for a man of my property to be found in this pickle, but every body is obliged now and then to be not at home, though, says you, I ought to be quite at home among so much hardware. To be sure watering pots, and steel traps, and spades, and scythes, and other ironworks, isn't quite the works for a book-room; but I objected to take the old watering pots and cetera at the valuation, and good reason why, I could have them bran new for the money from my warehouse, and to-day they've come down by the waggon, and I was just checking them by the invoice."

"My good Sir," replied the Baronet, "it's no fault of your's if I've walked you up in moulting time, and you are not in full feather. I've been amiss and dead lame with the gout, or I should have been over before to bid you welcome to Hollington. I sincerely hope you find your new house to your liking, and the air agreeable to your constitution."

"Candour compels to say," answered Twigg, his brow suddenly over-casting as he spoke, "I'm afraid it don't. Between you and me, I find retirement very hard work, and have hardly had time to eat, drink, or sleep, since I left off business. I never felt so low in my life, and I've been as low in life as most people. But I mustn't forget my manners now I'm a gentleman: it's time says you to go into the drawing-room and be introduced to Mrs. T.; I'll be bound she's waiting for us with the cake and wine." So saying he led the way to the drawing-room, where they found Mrs. Twigg playing the lady at a short notice. After the usual ceremonies of presentation, the father enquired for

Miss Twigg, to which the mother replied, "that she was in the library, studying and improving her mind with the fashionable novels."

"It's a lie, Madam," exclaimed Twigg, who was really a domestic Dionysius, "I've just come from the library myself."

"It's really a pity, Mr. T.," replied the wife, taking the epithet as calmly as if she was used to it, "that you let your temper be ruffled so by them servants. I hope there's no harm in not knowing exactly where Miss Twigg is, considering up to this very minute I've been engaged in the garden—showing the gardener where he's to sow the rose bushes, and plant the mignionnette."

"Then Pompey's a liar any how, for he told me you were in the drawing room, gold-banding the servants' hats." And with this which he called a clencher, Twigg turned to the Baronet, saying, "You see I mean to be the king bee of my own hive."

"I hope, Madam, you like your new mansion, and the neighbourhood," said Sir Mark, addressing the lady of the house, by way of putting a change

upon the conversation, " It's as pretty a country as one would wish to cross, never deep in winter, and the fences not stiffer than common."

" I have no doubt, Sir," answered Mrs. Twigg, " I shall find it just what you say, provided I'm able to leave the house ; but at present if I was to turn my back it would be all high life below stairs. Twelve in the kitchen is an evening party of themselves, but they can't be content. This very morning I heard the groom talking to the coachman about giving a ball."

" I have no doubt you did, Madam," replied the Baronet, looking very significantly at Twigg, to whom he remarked in a whisper, " she's running riot after a country dance and a dose of bitter-aloes."

" Make yourself easy, Mrs. T., about the groom," said Twigg, "for he'll groom no more here: I warned him off the premises an hour ago for deceiving me about the grey mare. The more fool says you to take his judgment, for of course he had a feeling out of the bargain, but a man that has ridden for fifty years upon shanks's naggy can't be

expected to know much about horses. But it don't do Sir Mark Tyrrel, Baronet, for a man of my property to show ignorance, so says I, Thomas, between you and me and the post is this mare a good horse? Sir, says Thomas, take my word on her, she's no action behind, none whatever; and accordingly I bought her and paid for her down on the nail; but instead of being a quiet one as he said, the very first time she was gigged she kicked the what-d'ye-call-it all into splinters."

"Not used to single harness may be," remarked the Baronet, "or only half broke. But how goes on the garden—it used to be well looked after by old Grubb?"

"Old Grubb has got warning too, Sir Mark," replied the lady, "and I'm sorry to say arn't working out his month as if he cared about a character. By desire of Mr. T. he was to sow six sacks of potatoes, and out of sheer spite, he has sliced 'em all up into slivers, as if they were going to be baked under a joint of meat."

"Damn the potatoes" said Twigg, getting warm, "that's only a flea bite: but it is hard, Sir

Mark, that a man like me can't walk over my own fields, to look at my own prospects, without having my head threatened into holes. Only last Monday, I was called to, if I didn't make myself scarce, my brains would be let out for a holiday, by a ruffian-looking fellow that was driving pegs into the ground, with pieces of wire tied to the top."

"Necklaces for poor Puss," said the Baronet with a significant wink to Twigg, which Twigg took like a man who heard, for the first time, of cats wearing such ornaments.

"But of course, Madam," continued Sir Mark, "you derive great satisfaction from your dairy. I've observed there's nothing my own town friends settle down to so kindly, as the home made butter!"

"It a'nt eatable," exclaimed Mrs. Twigg, her eyes filling with tears, "and we have to buy from the village. I'm sure it's no fault of our's, for we keep four cows."

"As for eggs," chimed in Mr. Twigg, "if I wanted one for breakfast, I might as well look for 'em in a mare's nest. We've got thirty hens, but it's all talking and no doing; they all go cackling about the

stable-yard, instead of laying. Talking of the stable-yard, Sir Mark, how much victuals ought one to give a coach-horse for a meal?"

"Half a peck of oats mixed with chaff, morning, noon, and night, and as much hay as they'll eat," said the Baronet, "with maybe a handful of beans according to their work."

"I said so, Mrs. T." exclaimed Twigg, with almost a shout, "the animals are over-indulged. "My horses, Sir Mark, every day they sit down to eat, have a truss of hay a-piece, two pecks of oats, and beans by the bushel, for I've calculated their bills of fares."

"Egad then," said Sir Mark, "if they've any blood in 'em they'll want good handling, and curbing up tight, for of course they're ready to jump out of their harness."

"Not a bit of it," said Twigg, "they're as gentle as Jarvies, and go as slow as if they were taking a fare off the stones a little before sunset."

"And they had need to be dossil," exclaimed Mrs. Twigg, "with such an unsober coachman. The only ride I've had, I got out and walked. It's

a thousand pities too, for he's a rosy fresh-coloured man, and looks well in the skyblue and orange."

The conversation was here interrupted by the entrance of Miss Twigg, who, in answer to the parental enquiries, replied, that she had been an airing in the new carriage. She was a fine showy looking girl of seventeen, with dark active eyes, which kept a good look out, though not on the Preventive service; a nose handsome, but prominent, and a good set of teeth, which she was as fond of showing as a wiry Scotch terrier. Even at so early an hour as noon she appeared to be dressed for dinner, and to tell the truth, a little overdone. She was evidently her father's idol, and his eyes beamed with triumph, as he presented her as his only daughter to "Sir Mark Tyrrel, Baronet," whom she favoured with one of those curtseys, which, to adopt a common oratorical figure, are "backward in coming forward."

"I have been telling the Baronet, my love," said Mrs. Twigg, "how beset we are with our servants. Perhaps, Sir Mark Tyrrel, Baronet, if an old resident, you can inform if it's true, that this

very house has been so repeatedly robbed and broke into as is said. For my own part, I have never been quite easy, since observing that the house-dog objects to bark at any one but the family."

"If my memory can hold its own," said Sir Mark, "there were two or three little attempts at burglary, but they never got beyond a hole in the shutter. Old Sir Theodore was game to the back-bone, and a dead shot, and would as soon have peppered a house-breaker as a self-hunting cur."

"There's no comfort in that," remarked the young lady, looking gravely towards her mamma, "for papa never could let off anything in his life—not that even blunderbusses would be of use in such frights as ours. What with the screech-owl, and the wind tolling the dinner-bell, and the pigeons coming flapping down the chimney, and the horrid rats behind the old wainscot, I never spent such terrifying nights since I read the Romance of the Haunted House."

"To tell the truth," said Twigg to the Baronet, in a confidential tone, "the Hive doesn't make

much honey at present, and I'm afraid I've come down rather too much for the good-will—but halloo," he shouted as he ran to the window, "that damned blackamoor has tied the horse to the sun-dial, and he has pulled its nose off!"

In fact the Sorrel was grazing about the forecourt with Time's index hanging to his bridle; a sort of hint, as it seemed, to his master, who accordingly took his leave; and as he trotted home, he could not help mentally remarking, that to judge from the number of faults and checks, the Twiggs were hunting after happiness with an infernal cold scent.

CHAPTER XIV.

Isab. ——————— Yet show some pity.
Aug. I show it most of all, when I show justice;
For then I pity those I do not know,
Which a dismiss'd offence would after gall;
And do him right, that, answering one foul wrong,
Lives not to act another.

MEASURE FOR MEASURE.

Oh, she is
Ten times more gentle than her father's crabbed;
And he's composed of harshness.

TEMPEST.

THE Baronet had accomplished about half the distance homeward, when at the turn of a lane he caught sight of a gentleman, who was walking in the same direction, with a young lady leaning upon his arm. He immediately gave a joyous view holla, and urged his Sorrel into a gallop,

which quickly brought him alongside of the pedestrians, whom he had recognised afar off, as his old friend and neighbour Mr. Rivers, and his first favourite Miss Grace. As the stern magistrate and his daughter turned their heads at once towards the rider, they presented a striking impersonation of Justice tempered with Mercy; the pale face of the father wearing its usual expression of austerity, with features as frigid as a December day, when frost has stereotyped even the fluids into rigid forms and wrinkles; while the cheerful countenance of the daughter laughed all over, redolent of health, youth, and joy, as a May morning.

Never did the sunlight fall on two so different, yet so akin. Law had indeed inscribed her terrors on the person of her minister—he had a high square forehead, straight black eyebrows, and two dark stedfast eagle-looking eyes, that evidently would not wink at anything. His nose was Roman, which, like a buttress, served to support his face in its massive dignity; and his mouth was rather wide, with two almost invisible thin lips which were always pale from habitual compression. In com-

plexion and texture his skin resembled parchment, and seemed equally devoid of life and feeling. Draco indeed, when he wrote his laws in blood, must have derived his fluid from the veins of some such stern worshipper of Themis, seeing that it was an ink nothing akin to those which are called sympathetic. No impulse of human passion, love, hate, anger, or grief, ever altered the hue which dwelt on the obdurate visage of the magistrate, whom a romantic fancy might have taken for the Cadi of that oriental city in the Arabian Nights whose inhabitants were all turned into marble.

In figure he was very thin, very tall, and very erect, so that with his forbidding countenance at top, he might be aptly compared to a "take notice" board, promising prosecution and persecution according to law to all trespassers on the wide domains of the statutes at large. On the Bench indeed, he held himself so stiffly upright in person, and so staunchly inflexible in feeling that, as a waggish London attorney once remarked, "he seemed actually to have swallowed the sword of Justice."

By the side of this portentous personage stood

the fairy-like Grace, the sunshine transmuting her auburn locks into gold, and glistening in her gentle eyes, deeply blue and liquid, as violets bathed in dew. But rocks have their flowers, and deserts their fountains: and from the hard arid nature of the parent sprang a beautiful plant, so instinct with a gushing sympathy for human sorrow, as to resemble that weeping tree which refreshes the parched inhabitants of earth with the moisture it has collected from heaven. Too seldom was she allowed to intercede between justice and its victims; but when she did, she was like the angel in Sterne, who dropped a tear on the indictment, and blotted it out for ever. As the sole child of a widower, her voice had a charm, like the music of Orpheus, to soften the rock and bend the rugged oak of her parent's nature, who now and then relented, like Pluto, and allowed a poor soul who had fallen into his Tartarus, to revisit the light and air. Many blessings were consequently showered on the beautiful head of Grace Rivers; and in particular, the fervent petition of a grateful Irishman

who had been reprieved through her influence, became quite a popular form of prayer. "Oh the darlint of the world. A joyful long life to her, and many of 'em. And plaze God to send his Honour another lady, and a dozen more only daughters!"

"Zounds! neighbour, you've been a shy cock lately," said Sir Mark, dismounting and passing his arm through the bridle; "time was you used to make the Hall your home, but a badger couldn't have given it up more thoroughly if a fox had laid his billot at the door. I almost began to think it who-oop to our old friendship. I've a crow to pick with Grace too—I don't know whether I oughtn't to pluck a whole rookery, squabbs and all."

"I should feel your reproach, Sir Mark, as a capital indictment," returned the Justice, "if my conscience could find it a true bill. But private pleasures must defer to the public service."

"And my pleasure to my father's," added Grace, at the same time offering her little hand to the Baronet, who clasped it in "his broad bronzed hand," with an affection which showed

that the crow he had talked of picking was in reality a dove.

"We have had a very heavy sessions," said the Justice, resuming his apology. "Of course you have heard of the murder at Hazel Bridge, and as a zealous magistrate, my time and humble talents have been arduously employed,—I need only say, I have had eighteen taken up on suspicion, and remanded twelve."

"I really believe," said Grace, "those dreadful murderers will be the death of my poor father; he scarcely eats, drinks, or sleeps, till he brings them to justice; and considering the misery and terror of the mothers, and wives, and sisters, and children, of those he is obliged to suspect and apprehend, I can conceive nothing more harrowing to the feelings."

"Feeling" said the Magistrate, "is out of the question; the course of justice is like that of the sacred car of Jaggernaut, which may not deviate from its appointed path to spare the voluntary sufferings of those who may choose to throw themselves under its wheels."

"It's a mercy, then, your car don't drive much near London," said the Baronet laughing, "or it would soon have more deodands than spokes on its wheels. As for the boys, they try how leisurely they can cross before your horse's nose, and by Jove, they time your pace to a second. Then there are the spavined and wind-galled old women, that can't make up their minds to cross, till you're close on their haunches. And the gossipping old men that pull up in the middle of the road, to observe the changes in the neighbourhood; to say nothing of the tipsy ones, that try to win a race with you by crossing and jostling; or the Sunday evening folks, when the infantry will walk in the horse-road, and the cavalry mustn't ride on the footpath. If you were to drive your car there as you say, without swerving or holding hard, you mustn't have a footman behind, but a coroner in livery."

"I see no reason to revise my judgment," replied the magistrate, "even in the cases you have so facetiously adduced. There is little difference between the highwayman who takes your money, and the footpads you mention, who delay you on

the road, and rob you of your time by the same process of putting you in bodily fear, either for their persons or your own. The penalty, whether inflicted by a pistol bullet in the first case, or by a horse's hoof in the second, is justly incurred by the sufferer's own act and deed, and he must abide the issue. So as I said before, the course of law—"

"Must be sharp coursing indeed," said Sir Mark, "when your worship is the tryer. A stout hare with a fair start may get away from the best of the long dogs; but the more law you give, the worse chance of saving one's flix."

"He is not so severe as he pretends," said Grace, earnestly addressing the Baronet; "indeed he is not. To hear him talk, you would take him for a Judge Jefferies. But he always does justice to every one but himself."

"I am sorry, Grace," said the magistrate in a severe tone, "that a child of mine should indulge in such a speech without perceiving that it involves a serious censure on her parent. I never *pretend* to discharge my duty by threatening when I ought to punish. Ill indeed would it become me by

undue lenity to impeach the mildness of those laws which have been framed by the equity, the wisdom, and the humanity, of the three estates of the realm. As such, I am imperiously bound to dispense their pains and penalties according to the letter, without stint or extenuation, fear or favour. And I trust I may be forgiven for saying that I have invariably dealt the same impartial measure to all—high or low, rich or poor."

"Why truly," said Sir Mark, considerately stepping in to the rescue of poor Grace, who looked distressed at her father's rebuke, "I should be very sorry to fall into your worshipful hands with no better defence than my Baronet's patent."

"Sir Mark, I am deeply obliged by so flattering an opinion," said the Justice, with a grave bow and a grim smile, "which I hope I shall continue to deserve while I have the honour to remain in the commission. Alike unshaken by popular clamour or private prejudice, the terrors—the wholesome terrors—of the law shall never be frittered away in my hands by mistaken mitigations. Mercy to the individual is cruelty to society."

"And mercy to society is cruelty to the individual," said Sir Mark gaily, "when it deprives a gouty prisoner of the usual visits of an old friend and a young favourite. You are sadly missed, Grace, at the Hall; old Deborah has no one to ask after her asthma, old Ralph the gardener has nobody to gossip with him about his flowers, and Ralph's old master has nobody to sing songs to him like a May nightingale."

"I have neither forgotten the Hall nor its kind inhabitants," replied Grace, "though I may have seemed a little remiss. I ought indeed to have enquired before after my young friends. The bold Ringwood, who used to furnish me with birds for my aviary; and the studious Raby, who culled and copied out for me the prettiest poems; and last, not least, your Sindbad of a nephew, who entertained me with endless stories of sharks and fireflies, and Maroons and rock-snakes, and alligators, and the beautiful Quadroons."

"They are running riot, Grace, I suspect, like other young collegians," said Sir Mark, "getting learning into their heads by day, and wine into

their heads by night; sowing wild oats and so-forth, with an ingo now and then at the old battle-royal of Town and Gown."

"The more disgrace to the proctors," remarked the magistrate, "who are invested with the power of repressing such disorders. What signifies it that the University has statutes of her own, if they be not enforced? Expulsion and rustication become nominal punishments, mere nursery bug-bears, and Alma Mater herself appears like a silly indulgent mother, who spoils her children by sparing the rod. For my own part, if I were a proctor—"

"You'd make a rare whipper-in no doubt," said the Baronet, laughing, "and Madcap, and Folly, and Frolic, and Thoughtless, and the rest of the puppies, would often run yelping along with their sterns between their gaskins. But we are come to the cross-roads, and yonder is the old finger-post, pointing with one hand towards Tylney, and with the other to Hawksley, like a great staring hawbuck giving one news of the fox. As a master of hounds, the field ought to follow my lead,

which is towards the Hall and the venison-pasty and other oddments that have been prepared for dinner. Such old friends as Mr. and Miss Rivers, will not stand on ceremony, and object to try my covers, without the meet being advertised a fortnight before-hand."

"We should have much pleasure in accepting the invitation," returned the magistrate, adopting the royal pronoun in behalf of Grace and himself, "but till we have appeased the cravings of justice in this bloody business at Hazel Bridge, we have no other appetite, and we must decline with great regret the hospitality of the Hall. There are twelve men still to re-examine, and we have issued warrants against seven more."

"Well, God send them a good deliverance," said Sir Mark, "which I believe is a legal prayer, and so I wish your worship good day. As for you, Grace," he continued, laying his hand on her shoulder with the fondness of a father, "you're like a bait hung over the Tenth Commandment, to trap me into coveting what belongs to my neighbour.

I forgot to tell you I have a sister coming home to the Hall, who will love you as much as I do, as sure as she belongs to the Tyrrels. So if you will not visit me, you can call on *her*—besides the Oxford fence-months will soon be over, and my boys will be again about the forest."

"I hope to be amongst the first, Sir Mark, to welcome your sister's arrival," and Grace slightly blushed as she spoke, adding with some emotion, "and I shall treasure her love the more, as I have never known the blessing of a mother's."

A general shaking of hands ensued, and the Baronet remounted Sorrel, who speedily carried him to the high road, just in time to be amused with an equipage which must have ludicrously answered an innkeeper's summons for a "first turn out." It was a neat postchaise, anything but neat in itself, even if it had not been littered all over with trunks, and baskets, and bandboxes; and it was drawn by two horses—a rusty black, and a dirty white, who seemed running a dead heat, though one trotted and the other cantered. As for

the postillion, he looked as if he literally *farmed* the post-horse duty, for with a professional blue jacket and boots, he wore the straw hat and the velveteens of a plough-boy. In lieu of a whip he carried a hazel stick, with which he occasionally belaboured the rusty black, whose heels seemed to possess all the grease that was wanted for the wheels—while ever and anon a bundle of tartan popped out of the near window, and exhorted the driver to make more speed, with the promise of "a saxpence to himsel." Instead of the pace getting better, however, it decreased, till at last the wretched over-driven cattle moved almost as slowly as those long-tailed black post-horses wherewith we post to eternity. Besides, at every fresh Scotch appeal from the window, the postillion, if so he might be called, pulled up to explain why he could go no faster.

"I tellee, missus, the meare's leame and can't goo much fudder. She be fazzy, and it beant no use to whup she."

The Baronet was fain, therefore, to ride a-head, and leave these pilgrims to their progress, which was so tedious that the milestones—described by

Sheridan as the most unsociable of all things, for you never see two of them together,—even the unsociable milestones seemed to keep each other at an unusual distance.

CHAPTER XV.

"The Campbells are coming, hurrah, hurrah!"

OLD BALLAD.

O relieve me, or I shall lose my hearing;
You have raised a fury up into her tongue;
A parliament of women could not make
Such a confused noise as that she utters.

GREEN'S TU QUOQUE.

THE Baronet had been at home about half an hour, and old Deborah had just administered to him a biscuit and a bumper of Madeira, by way of removing the wire edge of his appetite, which had been well honed and stropped by his morning ride, when the sharp eye of the housekeeper happened to glance through a window which overlooked the avenue. Her attention was immediately

fixed by some object moving along between the stately chesnuts which lined the approach to the Hall, but as yet too distant for her sight to define its character; at last it came near enough for her to venture on a definite announcement, in her usual style, her asthma literally breaking the news she communicated.

"Your honour there's a post—chaise and Oh Lord!—driven by a plough—boy in a blue—jacket and top—boots and, mercy on us—the oddest looking woman—alive in a harlequin cloak—reaching out of window—and waving—her arms—like mad!"

Sir Mark, looking out in the same direction, recognized at a glimpse the identical equipage which he had left on the high-road going so deliberately; but the driver, like a true jockey, had partly saved his horses for a rush at the end; and they now came smoking along as if literally boiling a gallop, to the visible terror of the woman in tartan, whose arms were working at the front window like the limbs of a telegraph. Onward he dashed, looking a winner all the way, to the Hall-door, where he

pulled up with a suddenness that sent the two horses and the Scotch woman on their haunches, the shock at the same moment breaking the cords of a trunk which had been riding on the roof: the box immediately pitched off and burst open, and scattered such a quantity of miscellaneous articles, that like the fisherman in the Arabian Nights, when the geni emerged from the chest, every body wondered how such a bulk could have been contained in such a box. And as, in the same story, there came out in the first place "a very thick smoke which formed a great mist," so out of the Scotchwoman's trunk there ascended a dense cloud of dust, which appeared to have escaped from a large bag or poke of oatmeal, that had been destined to remind one Mr. Donald Cameron of the Land of Cakes. Unluckily, most of it had dispersed in air, except one little residue, which a broken greybeard of Glenlivet had converted into a sort of brose: in the same fluid floated a dozen finnin haddies, while part of the stream served to unbleach a web of home-made linen, which had unfurled itself on the gravel. A bran-new "braw

blue bonnet," intended for the sandy sconce of a nephew apprenticed to a London baker, pitched by chance on the head of Whop, the bull terrier, who was barking at the catastrophe, and who in resentment worried the cap into ribbons. Torment and Teazer, two old fox-hounds who were at large on their parole, gobbled up a mutton-ham in a twinkling; and while Jupiter bolted a Sunday mutch, accidentally filled with real Scotch marmalade, Venus made short work with a batch of short-cake, ornamented in sugar-plums. In the middle of the medley sprawled a huge body of clothes, with silk and gingham arms, and worsted and cotton legs. It was, in short, a total wreck,—at sight of which, as Lord Byron says,

"Then rose from earth to heaven, the wild farewell,—"

for Tibbie Campbell, our tartan woman, could not have set up a louder funeral wail, or coronach, if Mac Callum More himself had just expired, with all his tail.

In the meantime, the Baronet hurried down to the hall-door, and received his sister in his arms as she alighted from the chaise.

"Egad, Kate," he exclaimed, after a hearty embrace and welcome, "what with that bang and smother, your vessel seemed to fire her own salute on her arrival. Why, I rode a good mile on your track without owning to it; though I ought to have challenged at the 'harlequin cloak,' as Debby calls it, as coming from the North."

"And I hope my kind old Deborah keeps her health," said the sister, affectionately shaking the withered hand of the housekeeper, who could only reply by an hysterical cackle and a low curtsey.

"The Scotchwoman, brother, is a very old and faithful servant of mine, for whom I must beg house-room at the Hall."

"Use the Hall at your pleasure, Kate," returned the Baronet, "barring the dog-kennels and the stables. All the rest you may consider as your own manor, provided you'll join Deborah here with your tartan woman in the deputation. But after a long stage, you'll be glad of a bite and a sup, and so let us go up stairs. But first, do me

the favour to take up the Scotchwoman, for she's within hearing of the ladies' kennel, and I shouldn't like them to learn her style of giving tongue."

The Scotchwoman, in truth, was literally realising Sir Mark's description in more senses than one; for amongst her general cargo there happen'd to be some dried reindeer tongues, which her old sweetheart, the mate of the William Wallace, had imported from Riga to Dundee. As they were of the make and consistence of small cudgels, they were the most natural weapons at hand to be pelted successively at Jupiter, and Venus, and Torment, and Teazer, and Whop; who, with the instinctive sagacity of dogs, immediately galloped off with the missiles, that they might not serve for another discharge. At the same time she favoured the postboy with a volley of hard words, in the dialect of Fifeshire; to which he answered with an occasional shot, in the dialect of Berkshire, of course aggravating the misunderstanding.

"Wae worth that fule body, the maister at the inn," cried Tibbie, "for letting yon wiselike cannie

lad gang aff the saddle, and trusting his naigs to a muckle havering gowk, wha kens nae mair aboot guiding them than a born natural!"

"Ecod, she do wag her tongue moightily; but I doant moind she," remarked Jolterhead, looking stoical with all his might; and quietly pocketing a liberal guerdon, along with the hire of the chaise, away he rattled again, pursued by a parting benediction.

"Ay, gang yer gate, the unchancy Deevil's buckie that ye are—I'm thinking it 'll no be lang or ye coup the crans a'thegither,—and nae harm dune, gin the aivers suld ding out yer harns!"

"Whisht, Tibbie woman," said her mistress, interposing, "you're wanted to take the things up to my room; and never fash yourself about your own gear, for it shall all be made good."

"You're vary kind, my leddy," answered Tibbie, "but it's ill makin a silken pouch o' a sow's lug. Div ye think, mem, there's ony livin body in England can make short-breed, forbye marmalade—or div ye think the change-houses a'thegither haud sae muckle as ae mutchkin o' Glenlivit—or div ye

think the hail manty-makers in Lunnon can fashion siccan a mutch as yon illfaured hound is wearin in's wame? Made gude! by my troth it's gay an likely to come to pass, when the wind blaws back the meal from a' the airts intill yon poke. Made gude, indeed! In coorse, Mem, there's blue bonnets to be gotten aff windle-straes for the gatherin; and nae doot mutton-hams is to be pickit aff the grund like chuckie-stanes. There's wabs o' claith too, and napery, I'se warrent, amang thae English, wha toil not neither do they spin, ony mair than King Solomon's lilies. But as ye say, they're a' to be made gude."—So saying she applied herself to the removal of the packages, while the Baronet and his sister proceeded up stairs.

"And now, welcome again to the Hall, Kate," he said, kindly leading her into the drawing-room, "and I'm glad at heart you've run a ring back again to the old house, where you were roused."

"I'm thinking, Mark," she replied smiling, "that the old house has been getting itself an awful ill name since I left. Probably the ghost of Sir Walter has been playing its fearsome pranks be-

yond the common; but the postillion who should have driven us the last stage, fairly jumped out of the saddle at the mere mention of Tylney Hall; and as he resolutely refused to ride a foot in that direction, he got a discharge on the spot; and we were compelled to accept the services of the strange substitute you saw."

"Unlucky Joe, for a pony," exclaimed Sir Mark, with a vehement slap of his hand on his buckskins, "the more luck, Kate, for you that he bolted; for I've booked myself to ride over him roughshod. But now I think of it, you married into Scotland before Bedlamite was foaled. Sad changes in the family, Kate, since we parted—first Herbert, and then Bedlamite, and then your husband—but don't hang down your head. I forgot, in naming it, that I was putting the loaded collar on you, when I ought to cry, hold up."

The widow of the Laird of Glencosie really drooped her head, and the tears stood in her eyes at the Baronet's allusion to her losses; but she repressed her emotion, and enquired after her nephews, whom she had left as mere children.

"My dear Kate," said Sir Mark, adopting a confidential tone, "the boys are like my preserves, both a pleasure and a plague. You've seen a hen when some Cockney ignoramus has furnished her with a hatch of eggs, half ducks and half chickens; the chickens will not take to the water, and the ducklings will not take to the land—and so it is with my two sons. You cannot get Ringwood into learning, or Raby out of it—and there I am on the edge of the pond, trying to keep the brood together. If Ringwood would read a little, and Raby would sport a little, it would be a good cross. Between ourselves, I wish they were more like St. Kitts, but you won't know him by that nomination—I mean Herbert's brown colt,—and a promising colt he is."

The conversation was here interrupted by the entrance of Deborah, with refreshments for the traveller.

"If you please, Madam,"—she said, with a smile crumpling her aged features—"the Scotch —servant is in a towering—passion in the kitchen —because we don't—give her what—she wants,

but Lord help us—nobody can make her out—it was something about—four hoors—and a few kail."

"Poor Tibbie is hungry, Deborah," said the lady, "and was asking about dinner time, and a little broth. By the way, you may tell the cook from me, not to let Tibbie meddle with the cookery, or she will make kail of every thing; and I mind my brother is no so fond of spoon-meat as they are in the North."

"Not I, by the Lord Harry," said Sir Mark, "I'm for nothing but knife and fork. So lock up the pump-handle, Debby, and keep an eye to the boilers, or we shall have an ounce of mutton swimming in a tureen of barley-water—I've heard of their Scotch broths."

"They're not so much amiss either," said the sister, "when you get used to them."

"May be not," said Sir Mark, "with something to take after them, and provided you're only going to sit in your arm-chair. But to fill your barrel with broth before riding to fox-hounds, you might as well give your hunter a bucket of water to help him to gallop. Take my word for it, Kate, that's

the very reason why there's so little fox-hunting in Scotland."

"You would find some more formidable reasons, brother," said the lady, "in the shape of mountains, and lakes, and mosses. And now, Deborah, I will trouble you to show me to my chamber, and to send Tibbie to assist me in changing this dusty dress before dinner-time."

Accordingly Deborah ushered the lady, whom for the future we shall call Mrs. Hamilton, to her room; where she found the Scotchwoman actively engaged in unpacking the various trunks, and on uncording every one of which, she gave vent to a fresh lamentation over the fate of her own chest. Tibbie Campbell was not much given to the melting mood; but her eyes, though not absolutely raining, were filled with a sort of Scotch mist; and never perhaps, during the forty years of her life, had she felt so depressed and downhearted as at the present moment, when her feelings seemed to be playing a medley of "Ha Til mi tulidh"—"Lochaber no more"—"Dowf and dowie"—"Waly waly"—and other national Songs of Sorrow.

"Wae's me," she ejaculated, "it needs nae second-sight to ken the upshot—I'll be warld-weary in less than nae time. To think o' comin fra bonnie Glencosie, and kith an kin, intil an unco place where it's no possible to say to a livin creture 'come gie's ye're cracks'—Robbie Crushoe, puir fallow, wasna waur aff amang a wheen sawvidges. Fient a word can I speak down bye but the hizzies maun a' be glowrin and girnin at me, like born gomerils, and cryin 'what's yer wull?—what's yer wull?'"

"Tibbie, lass," said her mistress, in a tone of considerable kindness, "you're wiser than to look for a duck-egg in a corbie's nest; and you must not expect to hear the Scotch language from an English tongue. As for the chest, as your importation has been wrecked, I will furnish you with a cargo for exportation—and your friends at Glencosie shall no say of you, that out of sight is out of mind."

With this comfortable promise she judiciously tempered the troubles of the serving-woman, who,

nevertheless, could not help sighing as she turned over lace caps, and silk gowns, and other articles of female adornment, so spotless and splendid in comparison with her own ruined finery; which doubtless, on coming southward, she had contemplated in the same spirit as Winifred Jenkins, when she wrote about the yellow trolopee—"God he nose what havoc I shall make among the mail sects when I make my first appearance in this killing collar." However, she applied herself to her duties as tirewoman; which she performed tolerably, considering the perturbation of her mind; for she only thrust a pin into her mistress's shoulder, while thinking of a certain trysting thorn at Glencosie, and perfumed a handkerchief with sal volatile instead of lavender, during a mental visit to Glencosie Kirk—an image associated with a sound which was ringing in her ears.

"Od, Sirs," she exclaimed, "but ye guide matters an unco gate in the south. I've aye been tauld the English are no sae keen to harken till the meenister as some ither folk—but Lorsh keep

us, Mem, religion maun hae the worst o't, where the kirk-bell begins jowing just when a' body's ganging till their four-hoors."

"The ringing you hear, Tibbie," said her mistress, smiling, "is nothing but the dinner-bell, calling me to a service where every one is their own minister."

So saying, she descended and rejoined her brother at the dinner table, where the conversation, as may easily be supposed, took a retrospective turn, in which Herbert, Glencosie, Bedlamite, Ringwood, Raby, and St. Kitts, were the principal subjects. The future, however, was not overlooked by the Baronet; who, in the fullness of his heart, confided to his sister his matrimonial project concerning Ringwood and Grace Rivers, to which she replied by a judicious admonition against match-making; for she had experienced some of the evils of enforced marriages in her own union with the northern Laird—who was said to have courted the mother by way of winning the daughter.

"For the love of heaven, Mark," she said,

"neither make nor meddle in marriage; but let the young people select their own favourites. Love is a plant of deep growth and root; and he is a bad gardener who puts it into the head, instead of letting it spring from the heart. If you are so fond of Grace Rivers as you say, you can do the dear girl no better kindness than to let her affections take their own natural course. A maiden's heart, with all its sensitive feelings and fancies, is like one of her drawers full of delicate laces, and gossamer muslins and gauzes,—fabrics of too tender a texture to be turned over and rumpled by the rough hand of a father or a brother. Remember the appeal of poor Polly in the Beggar's Opera—

"Can love be controlled by advice?
Will Cupid our mother's obey?"

A serious question, Mark, which my own heart has been answering in the negative for these twelve years past."

"I do not know," said the Baronet, "but that you may be right about Grace and her father. To be sure the old cast-iron Justice would sign her marriage mittimus and send her off to church

just as he'd commit a gipsy-jade to the county jail; and maybe with a special constable for a bridesman. No, Kate, I'm not for coupling-up young people by the neck, when they're perhaps not fitter to run together than Lightning and Lounger, or a greyhound with a turnspit: but as to Ringwood and Grace, you might search the kingdom for a better match, whether for age, or shape, or temper."

"Well, brother," said Mrs. Hamilton, laughing, "I will only remind you of a saying which is, or ought to be, a Scotch proverb—'It's ill to begin bigging at the tap o' the lum.' It's very possible that Grace may prefer Raby to Ringwood, or Walter to either, and, as the trout said to the fisherman, when he fell into the milldam, 'where are you then?'"

"Your hedge is a stiff one to get over," said Sir Mark, with equal good humour, "but, as the farmer's mare said, when he tried to get before the deer, 'It's an event not likely to come off.' Ringwood against the field for a thousand—and here comes a backer who would stand half of the bet."

The personage thus alluded to, unceremoniously entered the room as the Baronet spoke; he made a bow, indeed, when introduced to Mrs. Hamilton, and then, with a familiar nod to Sir Mark, he drew a chair to the table, and helped himself to a glass of claret, which he immediately drank off with a deep sigh of enjoyment. A second followed, and then a third, before he made answer to the Baronet's enquiry whether he had met with any sport.

"Damned a bit," he replied, first yawning, and then diving his hands into his pockets—stretching out his legs—and looking downward, in the very attitude of the nobleman in the second plate of Marriage A-là-mode. "Met at Hawksley—a blank. Then to Foxcote—blank again; Windmills Grange—ditto; ditto at Golder's Gorse. Away to Hollington—found a vixen,—and whipped off."

"And the field," enquired Sir Mark, "were there many with the button?"

"Not a soul but the Farmers and myself—barring young Twigg; a queer one by Jove. Rode a bay pony very short in the legs, and wore a

scarlet coat very long in the skirts—looked devilish like general post riding proxy for twopenny."

"Now I think of it," said the Baronet, "I remember his father saying he had taken to hunting ever since being at Epping Forest on an Easter Monday. By the way, Kate, I forgot to tell you we have some distant relations settled very near us—a grandson of old Theophilus Tyrrel."

"As game a fellow, Madam," added the visitor, "as ever laid the long odds. Knew old Theophilus well—met him often at Newmarket—and meant to do the civil thing by his great grandson, Twigg junior; but it's no go—he'll never be dab at anything! Lent him my cats last Friday for a rabbiting, and he worked them with collar and string. Killed only one old doe rabbit—and contrived to hang the dog ferret for it, as dead as Theodore Gardelle!"

"I'm afraid," said Sir Mark, shaking his head, "the family will do little credit to the Tyrrels, when it comes to sporting. As for Twigg himself, he won't stand within two yards of a horse; and even then he watches its heels, as if the animal

had said to him, 'consider yourself kicked.' But come, fill up a bumper, and let's have the old standing toast of the hunt—'here's Pitt in the cabinet, and Fox in the field.'"

"Here's Pitt and Fox, then," said the guest, taking off his bumper; "and now for another," he added, as he closed the door after Mrs. Hamilton, who had taken the toast as a hint to retire, "'here's to all maids, wives, and widows.' Deserves three times three," he said, giving his empty glass a flourish in the air, "but want Ringwood to give us the hips. When will he be home from that d—d University?"

"After Hilary Term," said Sir Mark, "which is about the end of March."

"Confound Hilary, and his terms to boot!" cried the other, "might know better than to keep young fellows haltered up in his old musty stalls in the hunting season. Don't see why all the learning can't be done while the nags are summering at grass; but guess how it is—old Hilary don't hunt. A regular waddler—weighs sixteen stone—double chin—buz wig—shovel-hat, and

all that. A thousand pities, though!—think there's an otter in the Willow Brook—know there's a badger in Warner's Wood."

The conversation now took a turn of little interest except to the two sportsmen engaged in it, consisting of a series of such narratives as may be found daily under the usual heading of "Extraordinary Fox-chase," or "Remarkable Run with Mr. So-and-So's hounds." Instead, therefore, of circumstantially drawing Cubsy Cover—finding at Barkham—losing at Foilham—making a cast towards Sniffington—running him to East Splitting—then to West Splitting—throwing up again at Botherham—challenging at the Hand-post—rattling off to Bumpington—changing him at Shufflebury—trying back to Puzzleworth—hark forward again to Skurry Mead—viewing him at High Squinny—hard pressing him through Squashy Bottom, leaving Tidy Hall to the left—making in a direct line for Killingham—through Furrow Field, Clayworth, Splashbury, Muddington, Dustworth, Great Purley, and Little Purley, Upper Spraining, and Lower Spraining—one hour and

forty-five minutes—and losing him up a drain at Long Nikey;—instead of bestowing all this tediousness on the reader, we will give a brief description of Sir Mark's familiar.

Mr. Edward Somerville, commonly called "Squire Ned," was one of those cheerful, ingenious, obliging persons, with a host of little accomplishments, who, like Will Wimble, are sure to find a welcome in every house. In fact, he had the run of the parish, from the fireside of the Manor House and Rectory, to the chimney-corner of the small farmer. As the popular character well expressed of him, he was everybody's friend, and nobody's enemy but his own; the latter clause referring to various personal injuries which he had accidentally incurred at his own hands. He had lost the sight of his left eye through some experiments in percussion firing, (an invention time has since ripened,)—and a vermin trap of his own construction had snapped off two of his fingers; his left arm had been fractured by a kick from a colt of his own breaking; and he limped a little in walking, through falling with a scaffold of his own

contrivance, while superintending the erection of a cottage on an original plan. But of the cottage more anon. In the field he was invaluable—nobody could find a hare—mark down a cock—or make a cast, so well as the Squire: and he was almost as indispensable at the Hall, particularly when the Baronet had a fit of the gout, which only allowed him to kill his fox at second-hand in Ned's description. Moreover, he could listen as well as talk; and, above all, was an indefatigable player at backgammon or cribbage, Sir Mark's favourite games, and at which Ringwood, Raby, and even the Creole, were too apt to degenerate into "sleeping partners."

It was presumed that Ned was either a bachelor or a widower, for nobody ever ascertained which; all that could be learned from him was, that "when he put on his hat he covered his whole family." Indeed, he was never known to be visited by any one who claimed the remotest relationship;—but in default of kin he centred his whole affection on Ringwood, whom he loved with as much love as some economical fathers would make suffice for a long dozen of sons.

The curious were equally at fault about his means of living; he had bought a few acres of freehold, on which he had built himself a cottage, and he paid ready money for every thing; which was all that was known with regard to his revenue. As for the cottage, it was a perfect Merlin's cabinet of mechanical contrivances, such as "open sesame" doors, self-acting windows, spring closets, and nick-nacks in clock work; in short, it contained such a Century, or rather Millennium of Inventions, that if each had claimed its gold or silver medal from the Society of Arts, the Arthur Aikin of that period must have gone with all his firm into the Gazette. One part of the building, however, still held Ned's ingenuity at defiance, namely, an uncompromising chimney, the draft of which, according to the Polish game of drafts, was apt to take backwards, and discharge all the smoke into his sitting-room. In consequence, to the great amusement of the neighbourhood, the refractory pot was seen about once a month with a new cowl on its head, each differing quite as much in shape and fashion from its predecessor as the last new bonnet from Paris.

To return to the Hall. After killing a score of foxes over again, the Baronet and the Squire adjourned to the drawing-room, where, after tea, Mrs. Hamilton retiring early, they betook themselves to one of the favourite games; nor did they give over throwing dice, and taking up blots, and taking off men, till towards the smallest of the small hours;—for like Gargantua and Pantagruel, in Rabelais, they had appetites not to be satisfied by any ordinary quantity of gammons.

CHAPTER XVI.

"She is far from the land"———

MOORE'S IRISH MELODIES.

"One day whilst under sail we were becalmed near a little Island, even almost with the surface of the water, which resembled a green meadow. The Captain ordered his sails to be furled, and permitted such persons as had a mind to land upon the Island, amongst whom I was one. But while we were diverting ourselves with eating and drinking, and recovering ourselves from the fatigue of the sea, the Island on a sudden trembled and shook us terribly * * * * For what we took for an Island, was only the back of a whale."

SINDBAD'S FIRST VOYAGE.

"As the day is bright, and the air mild," said Mrs. Hamilton, when she rose the next morning from the breakfast-table, "I should enjoy a stroll in the pleasure-grounds and the Park; but I'll no trespass on your time, Mark, for I shall take Tibbie with me; the poor body will die else of suppressed Scotch."

Accordingly she sent a summons by the foot-

man for Tibbie, who quickly made her appearance in her usual morning-dress, part of which, indeed, belonged to the night; namely, a short white jacket, and a cap, the strings of which, however, were now untied, allowing two lappets to hang down by the side of her face, like the ears of a beagle; her lower garment was a dark blue petticoat, and as for her shoes, she held them in her right hand, and her stockings were in her left.

"Hoot awa', Tibbie," exclaimed her mistress, somewhat disconcerted at the apparition, "ye ought to have minded that you're no at Glencosie the noo.—Didn't I forewarn ye against gangin barefoot, while ye were dressing me this very morning?"

"It's no my wyte, Mem," replied Tibbie, very indignantly, "the flunkie tauld me I was wanted momently—Deil hae me, but I'se gie him a heezie for't—the off-taking ne'er-do-weel! my certie, he maun be worth his fee, a daundering swankie, that's aye daffin wi' the limmers and taupies—that's a' his darg."

"Well, well," interrupted her mistress, "enough

said—you're wanted to walk with me, so go to your busking"—and away padded the Scotch-woman to prepare herself for the promenade.

"Guineas to shillings," said the Baronet, "it was a trick of Jerry's to hurry up Tibbie in her dishabille: I'll warrant she's as good as a cock at Shrovetide, for 'em to fling at in the kitchen. But, by Jove! she seems able to hold her own against them all, like an old ram in a dog-kennel!"

"No fear of Tibbie among the women," said Mrs. Hamilton, laughing, "if they measure tongues with her, she will have a claymore against a dirk: as for the men, she cowed them all at Glencosie, not excepting the Laird himself. But she's a faithful devoted creature; and to save or serve me would walk on hot ploughshares, ay, as barefoot as you saw her just now." So saying she retired to put on her bonnet and shawl; and soon afterwards the Baronet, who had watched at the window, saw her walking in the garden, followed by Tibbie in shoes and hose; the rest of her costume, whatever it might be, even to her cap, being enveloped in the memorable "Harlequin cloak."

The alterations which twelve years, as well as the hand of man, had wrought in the pleasure-grounds, fully occupied the attention of Mrs. Hamilton; and Tibbie, somewhat dashed by the rebuke and the ridicule which attended her morning debût, walked after her equally silent, and equally ruminative, on the wonderful changes which only four days had effected in all that concerned herself.

At last the lady stopped before some moss-grown fragments of what had once been a summer-house, formerly her favourite retreat, but now in ruins. As she looked at the masses of brick-work which cumbered the ground, she could not help sighing, and murmuring a reflection on the desolation she surveyed.

"This then is all that remains of my beautiful summer-house, where I spent so many happy hours!—But the pleasure is dead and gone: and it is better, perhaps, that its abode should perish too. Tibbie," she continued, addressing her follower, "you would little think, lass, that yonder

ruin was once as bonnie a bower for a lady as ever was sung of in an auld-warld ballad."

There is an old superstition, that a ghost may not speak till it has been spoken to; and the Scotchwoman's tongue seemed to have been spell-bound by some similar injunction; for the moment she was thus appealed to, she began to talk like a spirit pressed for time, to say all its say before cock-crow.

"O mem," she exclaimed, "Gude send there may be nae waur ruining than yon! We're no come ae blink owre sune; mortal fut never cam intil a hoos in sairer need o' a redding-up. Lorsh keep us, the Laird wad be for risin up frae the mouls an' there were sic wastry at Glencosie. As fac's death, I saw yon cheil in the scarlet coatie, and the corded breeks,—the In-whupper I think they ca' him—devoorin the cauld beef, and the loaf-breed, and drinkin yill, nae less, till his par-ritch-time! And yon silly doited carline, Debo-rah, to stand lookin on at the fallow without flyting,—no but it wad be fushionless flyting, wi'

siccan a hoast. Then there's thae yowlin dowgs out-bye maun hae mair otmeal than wad be a neivefu' the piece to the hale generation o' gaber-lunzies and blue-gowns. Folk say Sir Mark Tirl has gowd by gowpens—but siller has an end to't as weel's a coo's tail—there maun be a down-come—there maun be a down-come."

"Never fash yourself about the siller, Tibbie," replied her mistress, "I'll answer for its lasting out from one year's end to another."

"And for my part," answered Tibbie, "I'll no neglect ony thing to haud the gear thegither. As for the In-whupper, I'm thinking I'll mak him as gleg's a gled to sup crowdy; wi' a taste o' a sower cog at an orra time! But, O mem! would it no be a Providential thing, and I'm sure it's my daily peteetion til the Throne of Grace, that He wad send down the hydrophoby amang they wastfu' tykes, and gar ilk ane devoor his neebour, by way o' sunkets? But the dowgs are naething! There's thretty naigs for the tod-hunting, for I countit them mysel—mair by token, I never saw sae mony horses thegither but ance, when the cawvalry were

pitting down the meal-mob at Dundee. I'm tauld butcher-meat is at tenpence the pund—but, O mem, what maun be the price o' tod's-flesh grantin it ever cam intil an ashet, het or cauld?

"If you are wise, Tibbie, woman," said Mrs. Hamilton, "you will not make or meddle with either dogs or horses at Tylney Hall."

"Weel," replied Tibbie, adroitly changing her point of attack, "folk that will to Cupar maun to Cupar. As weel, aiblins, be eaten out of house and ha' by hounds and horses, as by a wheen upsettin flunkies, and fliskmahoys. The vary fees o' 'em wad be a tocher for a laird's daughter! But the tae half o'them shall ken the but frae the ben, or the mouth's dune, as shure's my name's Cawmel. I jalouse the huntsman and the in-whuppers havena sae muckle wark out-bye, but that they can stand ahint the chairs, and hand aboot the ashets. Div ye no think, mem, ane of the in-whuppers might be spared whiles to drive the coach; for in course, mem, he can whup horses as weel as dowgs?"

In this strain Tibbie's tongue continued to run

on for some time, without any interruption from her mistress, who was not a little amused at the whimsical alterations that were suggested in her brother's household. They had now turned into the park, and were skirting a very extensive sheet of water, which lay between them and the house; when at an exclamation from Tibbie, the lady looked towards the avenue, prepared to see "the King comin or the provost o' Edinbro' at the least."

In truth a yellow-bodied carriage, with a coachman and footman in sky-blue-and-orange liveries, a scarlet hammer-cloth, and two grey horses, with "lots of bright brass bees on the harness," made a considerable glitter in the sunshine, as it swept along towards the Hall. At some distance in the rear, followed a dark green chariot, with drab liveries, drawn by two bays; the whole equipage bearing the same proportion in splendour to the preceding one, as the Lord Mayor's private carriage, to that showy gilt gingerbread vehicle, his coach of state. While the Scotchwoman gazed with unfeigned admiration at the procession, her mistress looked with some embarrassment, first at

the house, and then at the water, a sheet not very broad, but of considerable length.

"Oh, Tibbie," she exclaimed, "we are in a pretty dilemma! Yonder go visitors to the Hall; and here am I, who ought to meet them, on the wrong side of the lake. It will take half an hour's walking to get round it at either end."

"Never fash yoursel, mem, aboot that," replied Tibbie, "while there's yon bit boat to the fore. I'll tak ye o'er in no time; I ken that wark weel! Mony's the time I've been wi' Saundy in the coble, puir fallow, before he went to the sea."

So saying she jumped into the boat with great agility, and cast off a rope at the stern by which it was made fast to a post on the shore; the wind at the same moment making a sail of her "Harlequin cloak," and blowing the skiff at the rate of nine knots an hour towards the middle of the water.

"I have no much faith," muttered Mrs. Hamilton, "in Tibbie's seamanship. But for God's sake, what's the matter?" she called out to her ferry-woman, seeing that she wrung her hands and went through other pantomimical signals of distress.

"Oh mem, oh my leddy," shouted Tibbie, "there's nae skulls; and the ill-faured boat is chained wi' a chain at its neb! Here I maun sit till doomsday, gin I canna brak the chain, or pu' up the bottom o' the loch!"

"Deuce take the woman, with her boating," said Mrs. Hamilton, "she's moored there fast enough!" The little vessel indeed, after swinging round, had brought up with its head to the wind; and there, in the stern, sat the Tartan woman, a second Lady of the Lake,

> "With eyes upraised and lips apart,
> Like monument of Grecian art,"

and particularly that monument associated with "sedet æternumque sedebit."

"There's nothing to be done," said Mrs. Hamilton, "but to sit steady till I can send somebody from the Hall."

"Od mem," shouted Tibbie, "I'm gayan like to sit steady when there's a hole in the boat, that lets a' the water win in the moment I tak off my thoom. Lord' sake, mem, dinna be lang sending! But I'm thinkin, amang a' thae braw court gentry,

ye'll mind nae mair o' puir Tibbie Cawmel than o' a pickmaw."

"I would as soon forget a mermaid, if I had seen one," answered Mrs. Hamilton; and, in spite of the saying that "women and cows should never run," she set off at her best speed for the Hall, whence she dispatched the first man servant she met, to the rescue of her handmaiden. After a hasty toilet, she then made her appearance in the drawing room, where she found her brother, and was introduced to his visitors, namely, Mr., Mrs., and Miss Twigg, and T. Twigg, junior; Mr. Justice Rivers, and his fair daughter Grace. In reply to a remark from the Baronet, on the length of her walk, she entered into a narrative of poor Tibbie's mishap; Twigg fidgeting on his seat during the description, like an impatient orator who had something to say on the matter in hand; but when he heard of the boat swinging off into the middle of the water, he could contain no longer.

"Damn all boating," he exclaimed abruptly, "I knew how it would end! I was once near being boated into eternity myself."

"Don't mention it," said Mrs. Twigg, "the remembrance sets me all of a shiver."

"But I *will* mention it, Madam," answered Twigg, "for as there are young people present," here he looked at Miss Rivers, "it may serve as a warning. You must know, Mrs. T. and self determined last summer to take a holiday, and so we took advantage of a general fast, and shut-up, for a day's pleasure."

"As you are speaking before young persons," interrupted the Justice, "and by way of warning, I feel bound in duty to remark, that his Majesty's Royal Proclamation ought to have been better observed."

"And so he does, Sir," interposed Mrs. Twigg; "we have always fasted religiously, ever since we was able to afford it. Every Shrove-Tuesday we have pancakes, as sure as the day comes; and hot cross-buns on Good Friday, and salt fish and egg-sauce on Ash-Wednesday."

"Nobody keeps Lent stricter than I do," continued Twigg, "but says you, a man that has known what it is to want a meal, ought to know

how to fast. The time has been when salt-fish with egg-sauce, and pancakes, would have been like a Lord Mayor's Feast. But fasting has nothing to do with a day's pleasure. Well, my own vote was for Hornsey-wood-house; but as the boys are fond of rowing, they were both for boating up to Richmond, and so was Matilda, and Mrs. T.—that we might have a pic-nicking cold collection on the grass."

"I'll never dine on any grass again, except sparrow-grass," said Mrs. Twigg, with a laugh at her own joke; "it gave me the lumbargo for a month. I knew how the damp would rise with water all round us; but Mr. T. was obstinate, and insisted on laying the cloth on a little island, to be like Robinson Crusoe."

"It was called an Ait," said Miss Twigg affectedly, "and had a verdant tree in the middle."

"To be sure," said Twigg gravely, "I ought to have remembered that the Thames was a tidy river, and always rising and falling like the stocks. Well, there we were—hamper unpacked—cloth spread—pigeon pie—cold ham—cold fowl—cold

punch—every thing cold and comfortable—when all at once, says Mrs. T. with a scream, 'Mercy on us, the island's getting littler!' And sure enough, as we watched, the water kept creeping on, and creeping on, till it came to the edge of the table-cloth and threatened to swallow up everything! There we were, in eminent danger, and no boat; for those d—d boys had gone up the d—d river after some d—d swans."

"Haw! haw! haw!" burst out the graceless Twigg, junior; "and when we came back, and looked for the island, there was 'Tilda singing-out, on the top of the tree; and mother roosting a little further down; with father hugging the trunk, up to his coat-flaps in water!"

"None of your levity, Sir," said Twigg very sternly: "if I'd been drowned through your swan-hopping, you wouldn't be in the station in life you enjoy."

"Stealing a King's swan, young man," said the Justice solemnly, "is capital felony, without benefit of clergy."

"I assure you, Sir Mark Tyrrel, Baronet," re-

sumed Twigg, "my reflections, when I saw the devouring element raging round us, was very serious—very serious indeed! Here's a situation, thinks I, for a man of my property."

"Egad!" said Sir Mark, smiling, "or for a man of no property."

"I declare I could have cried with vexation," said Mrs. Twigg, "to see the good table-cloth floating away; and the hamper, and all the nice eatables, being squamped. As for the silver forks and plate, it was all lost in the deep; for though we paid a waterman something handsome, to look for them when the island came up again, he never brought us nothing but a mustard-pot full of mud!"

"Very provoking indeed, madam," said the Baronet. "But if you're fond of angling," he continued, addressing Twigg, "you should have got a punt, and fished on the spot directly; for what with the pigeon-pie, the cold ham, and so forth, you had ground-baited rarely for barbel. I only hope, Grace, that you will not take fright at this story, and give up our boat excursions on the lake?"

"Certainly not," answered Grace, "while the

vessel has so skilful a master as the Squire, and so expert a mate as Ringwood."

"Oh, it must be delightful," exclaimed Miss Twigg. "For my own part, I don't mean to give up going on the water—and lakes are so romantic! And besides, nobody ever endangers and frightens one, except one's own brothers."

"It's all your own fault," said young Twigg, "if sisters didn't squawk out so, and go into kicking hysterics, there'd be no fun in frightening 'em. But I'll be bound Miss Rivers knows better how to behave in a boat."

"I really cannot answer for my behaviour," said Grace, "if I had to climb into a tree for my life, like King Charles the Second."

"Well, I'll warrant then, you're no coward on land, Miss," said young Twigg, with as gallant an air as he could assume; "would you believe it, mother made faces all the way here, and would have it the horses were running away—though nothing was taking fright but herself. And there's 'Tilda won't walk out for fear, 'cause she's three times seen a dark woman, like a gipsy, about the lanes."

"As for me," said Mrs. Twigg, "I don't care who knows it, but I wasn't used to a carriage till late in life: and two hackney-coach-horses, you know, Sir Mark, is one thing, and a pair of spirity rumbustical high-mettled animals, is another; and they're mettlesome enough, though Mr. T. bought greys on purpose, as being the oldest, and likely to be most steadiest."

"Pooh, pooh, Mrs. T.," said Mr. Twigg, "the horses go no better than they should do; only you're so confoundedly timid! Matilda's right though, about the brown woman, for I don't half like her myself. I'm sure she's a thief, by her face; and says you, a man ought to know what a thieving face is, who has set as sheriff at the Old Bailey. I'll lay sixpence she has often been worshipped before Mr. Justice Rivers here."

"I really cannot say, Sir," returned the Justice; "but there are laws against trespassers and vagrants —and if the woman has damaged your property or annoyed you in person, by begging—I should be happy, on your information,—to discharge my duty as a magistrate."

"Why as for my property," answered Twigg,

" I can't say she has ever taken so much as a stick out of a hedge, or a mushroom from a field; and so far from begging, the only copper I ever chucked to her, she duck-and-draked into a pond! My lady, thinks I, if you'd begun life like me, you'd know a hapenny's a hapenny."

" There is something mysterious about her, that is certain," said Miss Twigg, " and she mutters to herself so, I should fancy she was a witch, only she does not look old enough."

" I believe, mem," enquired Mrs. Twigg, addressing Mrs. Hamilton, " you are a good deal troubled with witches in Scotland; I have been reading about them in Macbeth?"

" They are not so rife in the north, madam, as they were two hundred years ago," replied Mrs. Hamilton, with difficulty composing her face. " Some few, and especially the Highlanders, still believe in the influence of the evil eye; and attribute to it a mortality among their cattle, or a dearth in their dairies."

" You hear *that*, Mr. Twigg," said his lady with an awe-struck face, and a tone almost sepul-

chral. "We make no butter with four cows,—and haven't a drop of cream to our teas. And as to cattle going into the Bills of Mortality, didn't four sucking-pigs die of the measles last week, just as we'd made up our minds who to send 'em to? And didn't all our chickens go in pips, as fast as they was ready for the spit? And didn't the calf disappear the very day after it was weaned—as if by magic? Sir Mark, pray what is your opinion?

"Faith, Madam," said Sir Mark, "it's my belief there isn't a witch in the parish,—let alone little Grace here. And if Grace had an evil eye in her head, she would have murrain'd a cross-grained cow that chased her last summer,—but Ringwood ran up just at pancake-time, and stopped the tossing."

"And pray, Mr. Justice Rivers, what is your opinion of our strange losses?" enquired the bewildered Mrs. Twigg.

"Felony, Madam — larceny--petty larceny—fraud — embezzlement, and breach of trust," responded the Justice; "and the proper remedy is confinement,—whipping--branding—hard labour

—transportation—or HANGING!" he added in a tone that made the querist involuntarily look up at his head for a black cap.

"I knew I was right!" exclaimed Twigg, "from the very first day we came to the Hive, I've suspected every servant we have! I look into every thing too, with my own eyes; but they're cheating me—I know it—they're cheating me every hour of the day—and of the night too, d—n them! I shall never close my eyes in peace again!"

"Nor I neither, my dear," sighed his helpmate, "for we must burn a light in our room for the future—and that's sure to keep me broad awake."

"It's very hard," said Twigg, "for a man of my property to be always gnawed and nibbled at by vermin, like a cheese among rats and mice. I'll be bound at this very moment, if one knew what was doing behind backs—"

"My dear Mr. T.," exclaimed his partner, jumping up from her chair as if she had discovered a pin in it,—"we are really staying longer

than is agreeable to propriety at a first visit! But I'm sure Sir Mark will excuse."

So saying she made a motion as if to sit down again, but it was only a curtsey; and then Miss Twigg rose and performed a very elaborate curtsey, as if for the instruction of her mother; Twigg on his own part made one of those tradesman-like bows, when the body bends, but the legs cannot for the counter,—while his son kept repeating his ducks and bobs at Miss Rivers, whose eyes unfortunately would not "come to the bower." Every body received one invite (and some two or three) to visit the Apiary at Hollington; and then the family scrambled out of the room, and into the carriage.—Pompey jumped up behind,—and again yellow pannels, scarlet hammercloth, sky-blue-and-orange, grey horses, and bright brass bees, went glittering down the avenue.

As soon as they were gone, Grace and Mrs. Hamilton looked at each other for a moment, and then burst into an involuntary laugh; in which they were joined by Sir Mark; while even the

stern features of the magistrate relaxed into one of his grim smiles.

"Well, Grace," said the Baronet, "do you think you shall avail yourself of your invitation to the Hive?"

"I fear I shall not venture," replied Grace. "To be candid, I do not admire their way of making honey,—they seem to gather it all from stinging-nettles."

"And I," added the magistrate, "do not approve of their mode of complying with Royal and Ecclesiastical ordinances: nor of the young man's freedom in sporting over private manors. You heard his story of the pheasants, Sir Mark—nothing less than a direct act of poaching, in the eye of the law."——

"Ignorance, neighbour—mere ignorance, and town breeding," returned Sir Mark, "you cannot expect a London street-mongrel to come down and hunt his game like a staunch pointer. But 'ware hat! I have a dinner in the house, that will want justice done to it, and egad, you shall not stir, but on your own recognizance to return at

five o'clock, and in the meantime, you may as well leave Grace with Kate here, by way of bail."

To these terms, after some demur, his worship assented; to the great delight of his daughter, who had already conceived an instinctive liking for Mrs. Hamilton, which was as readily returned, for no one could remain long in Grace's company without a strong prepossession in her favour, even when she had not the advantage of such a foil as the over-dressed and under-bred Miss Twigg. The latter, like a crimson carnation, showy but artificial, and the former like a moss-rose, lovely, natural, sweet, and blushing from the rich warmth of its own heart.

The dark-green chariot again received the magistrate, and carried him back to Hawksley, that he might impartially re-examine the parties suspected of murder at Hazel Bridge, by hearing the nothing they had to say for themselves, and the everything that everybody had to say against them.

As soon as the Justice was gone, Sir Mark went to inspect his hounds, and Mrs. Hamilton sent a

summons to Tibbie, preparing Miss Rivers beforehand to see a daughter of Eve almost as original as her great mother.

"Well, Tibbie," enquired her mistress, "how did ye get landed—I hope you were not wet?"

"Ou mem," answered Tibbie, "I've had a wearifu' time o't. Ye may thole it was doom's cauld on the loch; and I'ze no uphaud but I thocht whiles o' a wee drappie o' hett toddy—but wae's me, says I, div ye no mind, lass, it was a' skailed wi' the kist? And Tibbie woman, says I, the King himsel, or the Provost o' London is up bye at the Ha'—an here ye are sittin without sae muckle as ae keek o' him to write o' to Glencosie. 'Od, mem, gin Sandy were fleeching at me himsel—I'm thinking he'd no fleech me into a boat after yon!"

"You shall have something warm to cure the cold, Tibbie," said Mrs. Hamilton, "and although you have wanted a sight of the King, the Provost is coming back here to his dinner; and I shall need your help in dressing. Away with ye then to my chamber, and set the toilette in order,"—and

off Tibbie trotted; leaving the two ladies to that kind of small talk, which is so very small that it would not print well except in a "Diamond Edition."

CHAPTER XVII.

" Hark you, friend, I suppose you don't
Come within the Vagrant Act; I suppose
You have some settled habitation?"

JUSTICE WOODCOCK.

" You have a daughter, but you want a son;
I have a son, Sir, but I want a daughter;
Then why not cure our double wants in one,
While Heralds' arms, and Love's, together quarter?"

ANON.

—— " 'Tis often seen,
Adoption strives with Nature; and choice breeds
A native slip to us from foreign seeds."

ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL.

THE Justice kept his appointment. At five o'clock he returned to the Hall with his hunger much sharpened by the re-examination of the twelve suspected persons; a process which took off

the edge of their stomachs in the same proportion, so that they went back to durance with little more appetite than Mr. Wordsworth's cattle, forty of which ate only like one.

" I am come to surrender to my bail," said the magistrate, as he entered the drawing-room. " It has been sharp work though, considering the heaviness of my calendar. I have had to whip and spur."

" Ay, I'll warrant the car of Juggernaut has not been at a stand-still in the interval," replied the Baronet, " but has been doing its twelve miles an hour."

" The public business has indeed advanced a stage," replied the magistrate. " I have discovered a clue to the murderers; and moreover I have made acquaintance with the brown woman who so frightened your citizen. I rather think she will wish we had never been on speaking terms. I assure you I read her a lecture—with my black cap on, as Grace calls it, when I use language necessarily severe."

" I pity her then," said Grace, in an undertone

to Mrs. Hamilton, "to a man even his rebukes and frowns must be terrible; but they must strike a woman to the earth!"

"And pray, Sir, what was the brown woman's offence?" enquired Mrs. Hamilton, turning round somewhat abruptly towards Mr. Rivers.

"She had done nothing morally wrong, Madam," replied the Justice, "but as she had no ostensible means of living, and was personally unknown to any one in the parish, Gregory, the constable, apprehended her, and brought her before me, that she might give an account of herself."

"And thereby gratify the curiosity of the village," said the Baronet, "by means of its gossip-monger old Gregory. I hope when he had her at bay, she flew at him like a marten-cat, and gave him a taste of her claws!"

"I can assure you, Sir Mark," said the Justice, "your client is quite competent to her own defence In the whole course of my experience, and I have been many years in the commission, I never encountered such a temper for violence, or such a tongue for what I may even call eloquence. Many

magistrates, of less standing and nerve, would perhaps have been moved by it to forget that their province is to punish not to pity. But a man before whom the human heart has been daily, almost hourly laid bare, and who knows, by professional investigation and dissection, that it is, as described in Scripture, deceitful and desperately wicked,—such a man is proof against that specious but spurious eloquence, which flows equally from the well-educated and the illiterate, to avert the penalty of crime,—from the lordly state traitor who sees the axe and the block in perspective, to the base-born felon who pleads with a rope round his neck."

"Well, heaven bless his Majesty," exclaimed the Baronet, "for not thinking, when he is making justices, of Mark Tyrrel! I can hunt anything that goes upon four legs; but when it comes to running down any creature upon two, whether man or woman, I'm a mere cur. I remember when Judge Jenkinson came our circuit, I thought it my duty to attend at the Assizes, out of respect to his Lordship; but I was dead beat at my first

trial. They brought in a prisoner, like a bag-fox, and turned him down in the middle of the whole pack of judges, and jailors, and lawyers, and witnesses, without a chance for his life. He was mobbed to death—he was by Jove!"

"Fortunately for the interests of social order," returned the Magistrate, "Nature makes some men of a sterner stuff. As a mere instrument of the law, a criminal Judge ought no more to be expected to sympathise, than the gallows itself. Were the Sword of Justice so softly tempered, that every blow made a notch in its own edge, we should soon have it worn down to the hilt. Such was not the metal of the elder Brutus, when he doomed the son of his own loins to death; and presided at the execution!"

"Oh that horrid Judgment of Brutus!" said Grace in an aside to Mrs. Hamilton. "It hangs over the fire-place in the study; and my father sets his features by the picture, as if it were a mirror. I wish I could say he did not regulate his feelings sometimes by the same model;—but many a poor poacher that I have almost begged

off, has owed the harshness of his sentence to a glance at the odious Roman stoic."

"Excuse my curiosity, Sir," said Mrs. Hamilton, again addressing the Justice,—"but at the risk of being classed by my brother amongst the village gossips, I am really curious to know more of this mysterious woman, whether she is young or old, handsome or ugly?"

"She possesses at least the remains of beauty, Madam," replied the Magistrate. "As for age, she may be either fifty or thirty; for irregular habits, vice, hard fare, and exposure to weather, cause considerable difference in the external signs. But I should state her at not more than forty, to judge from the brightness of her black eyes and the fulness of her figure; her arms, indeed, which she constantly used in gesticulation, were round and beautifully turned."

"Poor creature," exclaimed Grace, "she had perhaps seen better days! I have heard of children of good parentage being stolen and brought up by gipsies; and who knows but it may have been her fate?"

"Why, truly, if she had been filched from a noble family," said the Justice, with one of his grim smiles, "she could not have derived a haughtier bearing from her birth. In spite of Gregory, she seated herself in a chair with the air of a countess; and listened to his official report with the invulnerable nonchalance of one conscious of the privilege of the peerage. I can well fancy the dignified toss with which she threw Mr. Twigg's halfpenny into the duck-pond!"

"It looks like good blood, that's certain," said Sir Mark. "Too much spirit and action to have been a get by Gipsy out of Beggar,—grandsire Tinker—grandam Tramper great-grandsire Ratcatcher, by Costermonger, Sand-man, Knife-grinder, and so forth. Of course you let her go, for the sake of the breed."

"I DID let her go," returned the Justice, and here he paused,——"to the County Bridewell. She will beat hemp there for a month, as the statute directs."

This announcement caused a considerable sensation in his auditors; Sir Mark gave involuntarily

a significant whistle, and looked at his sister; who looked in turn at Grace; who looked down at the carpet.

Possibly the Magistrate interpreted their thoughts, for he immediately added that he had put it into the woman's own power to mitigate the sentence, by declaring her name and parish; both of which she contemptuously refused to communicate. Luckily the announcement of dinner interrupted any further conversation on the subject, and the mind of the Magistrate, like that of Justice Greedy, took a turn towards "the substantials."

As for the dinner, the bill of fare shall not be copied here in print, with a circumstantial description and criticism of all the made dishes, English or French; a custom as impertinent and annoying to the reader, as for a spectator at a theatre, jammed perhaps in a hot back-row of the pit, to have his eyes treated with the display of a stage banquet, and his ears with the popping of corks, —whereupon some malicious actor advances close to the lamps, and deliberately quaffs off his sparkling Champagne, iced of course, before our Tan-

talus's face. Suffice it that they dined; and then, after the ladies had retired, the Baronet and the Justice betook themselves steadily to drinking some claret, quite as good as La Fitte or Chateau Margaux, though known in those days by some other name.

After a few glasses dedicated to the old standing Tory toasts of the time, Sir Mark filled a bumper, and getting on his legs, drank it off to the health of "The First Favourite for the Maiden Stakes,—Grace Rivers;" the ceremony ending, according to an old fashioned form of gallantry, by the glass being thrown over his shoulder, and dashed to atoms on the carpet. The Justice was compelled to follow the example, and as he really doated on his daughter, he acknowledged the compliment in a warmer tone of feeling than could have been expected from so rock-like a source. Unwonted moisture,—"tears such as angels weep,"—bedimmed his falcon-like eyes, as he alluded to the virtues of his child, her frank, open disposition, and her affectionate devotion to himself; and for a moment the stern magistrate seemed devoted to no

other laws than those of Nature. In conclusion, he filled his glass, to the health of "Ringwood Tyrrel, the Hope of the Hall," duly honouring the toast with a smash of glass as before.

Sir Mark was no orator: he made no attempt even to express his feelings, by a speech; but he set up a joyful yoicks! which said quite as much,—and seized the hand of the Justice and shook it heartily. He had been longing, in secret, to introduce the subject which lay uppermost in his heart; and this fortunate coupling of Grace with Ringwood, seemed to have broken the ice before him.

"Egad, neighbour," he said, "I'm not much used to link my ideas together with dog-couples: but this toasting of your daughter and my son, has put a strange thought into my head. They are both of an age, both of a height, or thereabouts, and one is my heir, and the other your heiress, which is as fair a start as heart can wish. Suppose we were to lay an even pony or two, which will be married first? It would be a sporting thing; and if Grace comes in winner, I shall enjoy what I never enjoyed before,—the loss of my money!"

"Why then done, for a hundred," said the Justice, who like country gentlemen in general was in some degree a sportsman; and the generous influence of the grape, moreover, pre-disposed him to enter into the whim.

"Twice!" cried Sir Mark.

"Done again!" replied the Justice.

"Three times?"

"Done! done! and done!" cried the Justice; "and there I must stop. And pray endorse your betting-book, 'strictly private,' with its entry of a certain gambling magistrate, who may have to-morrow to suspend a publican's license, for allowing card playing,—Jonas Hanway for instance, and his whist club at the Rabbits."

"You may suspend me with the license," said Sir Mark, "when you can find any one to swear to their playing. But be easy about the betting-book; we will be only upon honour."

"By the way, Sir Mark," said the Magistrate, "there is a third chance in the said matrimonial race, that we have both overlooked; the possibility

of the parties coming to the church neck and neck at the same time!"

"A dead heat by Jove!" exclaimed the Baronet, with well-feigned surprise, "and an old jockey and racer like me, to forget that such events may come off! Egad, neighbour, it would not be a bad way of hedging our money, eh?"

"Sir Mark, are you serious or in joke?" enquired the Magistrate.

"Either, at your pleasure," returned the Baronet, assuming however a gravity of tone and look that indicated he was in earnest. The moment had come to speak, but he was puzzled how to begin. He fidgeted in his chair, filled a glass of claret, and gulped it down, then gave a loud hem, and then three very bad coughs.

"It's no use beating round the bush," he exclaimed at last, "when the game's a-foot! I think, friend Rivers, our ideas and wishes are packing well together; and if you are as agreeable as I am to the match between Ringwood and Grace, all I can say is, I will back son against daughter with

you, guinea for guinea;—and the dearest desire of my heart will be fulfilled to boot!"

"To be candid with you, Sir Mark," replied the Magistrate, "our bowls, biassed by old friendship, have been aimed at the same jack. Nothing indeed could afford me greater pride and pleasure than such an alliance. But as neither of the parties will be of age for a year or two, it seemed premature to ——"

"Zounds, man," interrupted the delighted Baronet, "you would not carry them into church, would you, without a little wooing before-hand?—Cupid wants training, as well as a colt, before you bring him to the post."

"Your remark is just," said the Magistrate: "for my own part I will take care to apprize Grace of our arrangement; and that henceforward she is to consider her affections engaged to your eldest son."

"No—hang it!—no," exclaimed Sir Mark. "Do not come the magistrate over her neither! It will be time enough to use our authority, as fathers, when either of the young people has bolted out of

the course. We mustn't inoculate, but let them take it naturally. Love is a plant with long straggling roots, and the gardener who attempts to pot it—no, that's not it!—but it's Kate's sentiment, and a very good one. And now boy, a bumper to a better match than was ever made on the turf. —Tally — tally-ho — yoicks — yoicks — yoicks!— yo—icks!"

It is amusing to think that during the foregoing conversation of the two fathers, the unconscious Grace was sitting in the very next room,

"In maiden meditation, fancy free;"

thinking no more of courtship, marriage, and Ringwood, than of squibs, crackers, and Guy Faux. Her lively spirits, her sweet temper, her natural good taste, and artless manners, had advanced her hourly in the opinion of Mrs. Hamilton; till at last, after a long kind look at her fair young face and graceful figure, that lady addressed her, in a tone of tenderness that thrilled through her very soul, as "her dear Miss Rivers."

"If I may beg a favour, my dear Madam," she replied, "pray oblige me by following the prece-

dent of Sir Mark, and calling me only by my Christian name,—Grace, plain Grace."

"Well then, Grace, my dear Grace, did you ever place a hollow sea-shell to your ear, and notice its perpetual sighing for the waters that ought to fill it?"

Grace signified that she had often done so on the coast.

"Come hither then, and tell me truly, did that young heart of yours never feel a craving, an indescribable craving,—as if there was some aching void in it that required filling up?"

The question suffused the face and neck of Grace with a deep blush; but it lasted only for an instant and vanished again ere she had pronounced the first word of her answer.

"Indeed, my dear Madam, I have felt it often—always at the sound of one word, and at the sight of one action;" and she concluded the sentence with a sigh.

"I know well what you mean," said Mrs. Hamilton, pressing her own hands to her bosom. "I feel it here at this moment—here, where I have felt it

for years. Alone, or in society—in joy or in sorrow, in sickness, in health, here it is—the same intense yearning, everlastingly crying out in its agony, give! give!—Tell me, my dear Grace, tell me, is it not even thus that your overcharged heart has pined for a mother?"

"Oh, God knows it," cried Grace, clasping her hands, and with difficulty suppressing the tears that were rushing upwards to her eyes; "my heart has throbbed almost to bursting, at the sight of caresses which I never—oh never knew!—never can know!"

"Even so, Grace," said Mrs. Hamilton, "have I been wrung with anguish, to see a mother embrace a daughter. It has been my fate to grieve through many lonely hours, but they would not have been either grievous or lonely, with some one—some such sweet girl as yourself—to love, and to love me. In imagination I have nursed this fair hope from bud to blossom, into even the full-blown flower. I have hung and trembled over her infancy—heard her lisp her first accents of love—

watched the little sports of her childhood—and have been the confidant of the secrets of her girlhood. And was it not singular, Grace, that the daughter of my poor fond fancy should have had eyes the very colour of your own, and the same bonny brown hair?"

To this question Grace made no reply, but by putting both her hands into those of Mrs. Hamilton, who gently drew the graceful girl towards her, and imprinted a kiss on her forehead. "A Welsh-woman," she continued, "would have sworn 'twas some tie of blood between us, that attracted my love to you from the first moment of our meeting!"

"And mine to you, my dear Madam," added Grace. "It is impossible I could remember you before you left the Hall, and yet that lady-like figure, and the benign smile, and the low gentle voice were so familiar to me, that it seemed like the fulfilment of a dream!"

"It *is* the fulfilment of a dream," said Mrs. Hamilton. "Our stars have spoken, and our hearts interpreted the oracle. Henceforth I will be your mother, and you shall be my daughter, the

dear child of my soul, if not of my body,—shall it not be so, my own sweet Grace?"

"O for ever! and ever!" exclaimed Grace, throwing herself into the arms that opened to receive her. "And here begin the happiest hours of my life!"

"And here end the most wretched of mine," said the widow, caressing her adopted daughter with as much tenderness as belongs to many real mothers. "Oh Grace, the blessing you would have been to me at Glencosie! Some day you shall know all; but for this evening at least, the past shall not sadden the present!"

As the reader is aware, there had been with regard to Grace what the ingenious and elegant Mr. Robins would call "a bidding in two places:" and at the very same moment that completed her maternal adoption in the drawing-room, the paternal shout and view-holla of Sir Mark ascended from the dining-room, in honour of his daughter-elect. It suggested no other idea, however, to the ladies but that either he had broken cover with some never-sufficiently-to-be-recorded fox; or that he

had taken abundance of wine, and would be the better for a never-sufficiently-to-be-announced cup of tea. Accordingly Mrs. Hamilton rang for the equipage, and made tea; and at about the sixth summons the gentlemen put in an appearance at her table, both certainly a little elevated, but by joy rather than the juice of the grape. Indeed the Baronet's head was so full of his favourite idea, that with an abstracted air he walked straight up to Grace, and gave her a hearty kiss, to the infinite astonishment of the young lady as well as his sister; and not a little to his own, when he recovered his recollection. The Justice alone, who was in the secret, and guessed what was passing in the mind of Sir Mark, conceived at once that the salute was anticipatory of the marriage ceremony, as was really the case; and his grim smile, at the sheepish look and awkward apologies of the Baronet, was the signal for a general laugh. All the parties were indeed in higher spirits than usual, and the evening passed away cheerfully, and before they separated, Sir Mark insisted on Grace singing one of her songs, in token that she had forgiven him for making her blush.

Grace immediately seated herself at a piano which in those days was reckoned a very grand one, though much such an instrument as a petty tradesman now selects at a broker's for a present to his daughter from boarding-school. After a short prelude, she sang to a plaintive Scotch air the following words, which, as a corollary to what had passed in the dining-room, made the two fathers exchange some very significant glances.

" My mother bids me love a lord,
My father does the same,
But then my heart has made a choice
Of one I will not name ;
My parents' frowns reject the suit,
Their angry words reprove,
But oh I cannot love the man
My mother bids me love !

They say his father is an Earl
And talk of high degree,
Broad ribbons and a star for him,
A coronet for me.—
I care not for the eagle's nest,
But building with the dove,
I cannot, cannot, love the man
My mother bids me love.

There is a secret voice that breathes
A fair and gentle mind,
There is a certain eye that tells
A heart that's warm and kind,
There is a vow so firm and fast,
And sealed in heav'n above,
That oh! I cannot love the man
My mother bids me love!

My father frets, my mother pines,
Their heads are silver-grey,
They cannot long possess a will
For me to disobey;
I would that I were in my grave,
This anguish to remove,
For oh! I cannot love the man
My mother bids me love."

"Egad, Grace," exclaimed the Baronet, "you have chosen a sorrowful ditty; Kate there is ready to cry. My own heart was at feather-weight awhile ago, but now it seems carrying six pounds extra. I hope the words are none of your own making?"

"Raby was so kind as to copy them for me," answered Grace, "from some book of poems in your library."

"Ay there it is," said Sir Mark, looking at the

Justice with a slight gloom on his brow. "Catch Ringwood at copying out anything—barring a 'recipe for making boots waterproof,' or a 'cure for the distemper.' I'll warrant, Grace, he never wrote out anything for you in his life?"

"Nothing adapted to the voice," answered Grace, with an arch smile; "but he once obliged me with autograph directions how to make German Paste for my singing-birds."

"And St. Kitts?" asked the Baronet.

"Your nephew used formerly to copy poems for me," replied Grace. "But our tastes did not coincide; and he grew tired of extracting from Rochester and Sedley, whom I could not relish,—and he had as little liking on his own part for my old favourite Herrick."

"Come Grace, come," said the Magistrate rising abruptly from his chair, "it is time to return to Hawksley,—or must I read the Riot Act and dissolve this meeting according to law? I have to look over the Hazel-Bridge evidence before I go to bed. Sir Mark, you will remember our bet for the Maiden Stakes?"

"Three hundred, even, the colt against the filly —and may neither of us win!" said the Baronet, with a knowing wink and a warm shake of the hand. "As for you, Grace, I see that you and Kate have cottoned, and I need not bid you come again soon to the Hall!"

"Miss Rivers has been so kind as to promise to come often," said Mrs. Hamilton. "I am to have the happiness of her society at least once a week."

"God bless you then, Grace," said Sir Mark, "and send you ability to keep your word. The boys will be home soon, and then I shall kiss and court you by proxy—but that's only a joke."

Thus they parted, and Mrs. Hamilton retired to her room, and the Baronet to his bed, to dream of weddings and rings and white favours, as if bride-cake had been placed under his pillow.

"Well, Tibbie," said the lady as the Scotch-woman helped her to undress, "how has all fared with you the night?"

"Od Mem," replied Tibbie, "it's just extra-ordinar, my head's rinnin round like a peery! I'm

thinking the justice-wark will be cannily dune the morn's morn, when the Provost and Sir Mark Tirl hae been at their high jinks. As fac's death, Mem, for I keekit in at the door, I saw the Provost casting the wine-glasses owre his shouther to play smash upon the flure!"

"An old English custom, Tibbie," said Mrs. Hamilton, "by way of doing honour to a health. Formerly it was common for gentlemen to cast their cravats of Mechlin lace, or their perukes, on the fire-grate, according to the example of the proposer of the toast."

"Macklin crawvats, and perukes! Gude safe 's!" exclaimed Tibbie, with an appropriate elevation of her eyes and hands. "My certie, it's no wonder thae English hae siccan a Nawtional Debt, as they ca't! Douce Dawvid Nicol,—and he's the cashier o' the Dundee Bank,—did never the like o' that!"

"But the kitchen, Tibbie," enquired the mistress, "how came ye on with the strange servants?"

"By my troth, Mem," said Tibbie, "they were camsteary eneuch. Yon prejink flunkies wha cam wi' the Provost, were owre up settin to drink yill,

but chappit on the butler, to bring ben the port wine and the sherry wine, as affhand as in a change-house, where they were gaun to pay the lawin'. But I'm thinking I gied them a screed o' flyting, instead o' yon fule body Deborah. 'Drink awa', Sirs,' says I, 'drink awa', ye're a' comin to pigs and whistles!' But I might have spared my breath to cool my parritch! Here's t'ye, Tibbie, cries ane, and here's t'ye, Tibbie, cries anither, and here's t'ye, Tibbie, cries yon Jerry, and send ye gude yill and gude custom at the Pig and Whistle!"

"Never fash yoursel, Tibbie," said the Mistress, "wi' the likes—you're no at Glencosie."

"Ou, Mem," said the Scotchwoman, "it 'maist gars me greet to see the dinging down o' the glass and the cheeny, and the siller-spunes, wi' their pliskies.—Div ye no think, Mem, it would be a saving o' siller to write north for a hantle o' wooden quaichs and bickers and horn spunes, for nae doot they'll be for emitatin their betters, and casting their drinkin-cups owre the shouther?"

"It's a serious question, Tibbie, and I must

sleep upon it," replied Mrs. Hamilton; and with this quietus she dismissed the handmaid to her own pillow, to dream, if one may guess at her night-visions, of a mad bull in a china-shop.

CHAPTER XVIII.

" And if a merry meeting may be wished, God prohibit it !"
DOGBERRY.

——— " He shall be endured—
What goodman boy ? I say he shall. Go to.
Am I the master here or you ? Go to."
OLD CAPULET.

" Patience perforce with wilful choler meeting,
Makes my flesh tremble with their different greeting,
I will withdraw ; but this intrusion shall,
Now seeming sweet, convert to bitter gall."
TYBALT.

" Between us two let there be peace ; both joining
As join'd in injuries, one enmity
Against a foe by doom express assign'd us,
That cruel serpent."
PARADISE LOST.

HILARY term ended at last, to the great delight of Squire Ned, who looked upon Ringwood as his adopted son ; a relationship originating in sporting, like that of Cotton, the angler, with " his Father Walton."

He acceded, therefore, with great glee, to a proposition from Sir Mark, that they should ride together on horseback as far as the first stage, to meet and welcome the young Collegians; while Dick the huntsman, and the whipper-in, should follow with led horses, for the use of the students.

"A clever little nag that," said the Squire, after a long one-eyed look at a brown gelding, that Dick was leading, "knows how to go—capital action."

"A picture isn't he?" said the Baronet. "I bought him last week, by way of a surprise to Ringwood. He was bred by old Toby Sparks, at Hollington; by Jiggumbob, out of Tolderol, by Diddledumkins, Cockalorum, and so forth."

"An odd fish old Toby," said the Squire, "always gives 'em queer names—can jump a bit no doubt?"

"He jumps like a flea," said Dick, "and as for galloping, he can go from anywhere to everywhere in forty minutes,—and back again."

"Glad of it," said Ned, "just the thing for Ring-

wood—all ready eh!" here he looked at his watch "Go!"

And away they trotted, the Squire keeping his horse a little in the rear of the Baronet's, a position which enabled him to divide his conversation between Sir Mark and the huntsman, who now and then exchanged a sentence with the whipper-in, as he followed with two led hacks; and in this order they took to the road. Occasionally, at a signal from the Squire, they slackened or increased their speed; and so well did he time the pace, that they arrived at the Green Dragon at * * * * just as the Oxford coach stopped to change horses.

"Well my boys, welcome home again," said the Baronet, shaking them successively by the hand; while the Squire, after a nod a-piece, gave Ringwood an affectionate slap on the back that would have corrected a smaller child.

"Been tooling the tits eh?" he said; "very pretty team,—near wheeler lame behind"—he continued, as he critically watched each horse as it went smoking and shaking its tail into the stable-yard. "Glad to see you, Ringwood," here

another slap. "Old Hilary hasn't rubbed off any of your bloom."

The eye of the father made a similar remark that Ringwood looked rather more florid than usual; while the complexion of Raby was somewhat paler than common,—the natural results of too much port and claret, and an excess of Greek and Latin. As for St. Kitts, his cheeks wore the old brown,—a tinge somewhat resembling that of an undoubted "portrait by Rembrandt" in a picture-dealer's window. At the same time, the three faces were as different in expression as in colour,—the Creole's implied indifference; that of Raby beamed with the quiet enjoyment of a mind at peace with itself, somewhat heightened by the pleasure of meeting his father; but, in spite of its healthy hue, the countenance of Ringwood was saddened by a cast of anxiety and gloom; hinting, too probably, that he looked back on time and money equally misspent at college. His quick eye, however, detected at a glance the new acquisition to the stable, and every thought of self-reproach for the follies or vices of the heir of Tylney was lost in the consideration

of the many good points about the offspring of Jiggumbob and Tolderol. From this reverie he was roused by the voice of his father.

"Well, how do you think he will carry you—for he is all your own, my boy, from the bridle to the crupper?"

"If he's old Sparks's colt, Sir, he's the very one I've long set my heart upon," answered Ringwood. "But if he's meant as a college-prize, Sir, he belongs more to St. Kitts than to me; and to Raby more than either."

"Raby be d—d," the Squire was about to say, but he suppressed the words, and contented himself with tacitly expressing his opinion, by snatching the bridle of the horse in question and turning him round with his head to Ringwood and his tail to Raby.

"For my part," said the Creole, "I disclaim any idea of rivalry in our studies—and am pained to think my cousin has suggested any enquiry as to our relative progress at Oxford."

"Sink the letter then," said Ringwood, in an under tone, at the same time shifting to the offside of the horse, and affecting to examine his fore feet.

"You forget—I am upon honour," replied the Creole, in the same tone and stooping into the same position.

"Why then—take care of yourselves!" cried Ringwood, springing into the saddle, and striking the spurs into the horse with such suddenness, that St. Kitts only escaped, by a desperate spring backwards, being thrown down and trampled under foot.

"Confound the fellow—he will start the mail," cried Sir Mark, catching the head of one of the leaders, who seemed inclined to improve upon the then rate of travelling, by running away with the coach. However Ringwood continued to spur desperately on, as if, Byron-like, he was under some excitement that was to be worked off by hard galloping; in fact when he returned, he was covered with dust, and the panting steed was in a lather of sweat and foam. "He is not a roarer that's certain," he said, as he dismounted and threw the bridle to the whipper-in.

"Who the devil said he was!" cried Sir Mark. "Dick see him thoroughly rubbed down,—and

have him well clothed. Let them all have a good feed of corn—and mind, Dick, see with your own eyes that the Green Dragon does not devour it for them. And now let's in-doors—for two legs must have a bait as well as four."

As they went in, Raby twitched his brother by the sleeve, and caused him to remain a little behind.

"For God's sake, and for your own sake, Ringwood," he said, "don't show this spleen before our father. St. Kitts will only play the amiable, and the comparison will be to your disadvantage."

"Right," said Ringwood, "and thank ye for the hint: he's sure to run cunning."

In pursuance of this line of policy, Ringwood discarded his reserve, and laughed and chatted as if determined to overcrow the Creole even in mirth and good humour. He drew humourous pictures of college comforts, of fresh-men, and tuft-hunters, of bed-makers, beadles, and barbers; and then he gave an Egan-like description of a pugilistic encounter between a gownsman and a bargeman, that made the Squire roar with laughter.

He next entered into an animated account of a boat-race, in which he had rowed among the winners; and then of a cock-fight; and then of a coursing meeting, well attended by Oxonians; to the evident delight of his father.

After such stirring subjects, the Creole's description of an examination, and the terrors and boggling of the unprepared; and of a college-inquisition, and the speech of a Proctor,—fell dead on the ear; the organ of Ringwood excepted, for he suspected, and perhaps rightly, that the narrative contained some covert reference, both retrospectively and prospectively, to his own career at college. At any rate he made the application to himself, and secretly resolved to be avenged at the first opportunity: he indulged his mood in the meantime, by throwing a threatening glance occasionally at the Creole, which the latter received with a calm smile, relying on his own superior powers of retaliation; even as the malignant viper which will bask lazily in your very path, conscious of his own cruel fangs, and daring your foot, whilst the

unarmed snake startles away, more fearing than feared, into the nearest thicket.

At last he struck, and with deadly effect. He well knew how to "heap coals on the head of his enemy," by dealing with him to all appearance generously, and even kindly, where less politic natures would avow their animosity by angry looks and bitter speech. He again took part in the conversation, and choosing Ringwood for his theme, repeated in glowing terms the praises he had heard lavished at Oxford on his intrepid riding; his superior shooting, which had made him the crack shot of the Pigeon Club; his exquisite driving, four-in-hand, on the box of the long coaches; and he even recorded certain Bacchanalian feats, at which his subject had been the hero; adding however a deprecatory clause, that such irregularities could scarcely be at all times avoided by a young man at the University, but at the expense of personal ridicule and insult, and that he had felt compelled himself to join occasionally in such orgies.

The Baronet's face glowed with pride during

the recital, and the Squire's one eye glistened with absolute delight: but Ringwood, for the first time in his life, heard with pain and disgust, an acknowledgement of his superior skill, ardour, and success in all the various branches of field sports. Neither did the younger brother listen with much pleasure to the next topic which the Creole thought proper to introduce; although he studiously quoted the very high eulogiums which had been pronounced on Raby's acquirements, in languages and classical literature. The extreme contrast between the reputation of the two brothers, thus artfully placed in juxtaposition, suggested an inference too obvious to escape the mind of the Baronet; who consequently shrank from any allusion or enquiry as to scholarship—being sorrowfully persuaded that his favourite son and heir had made neither step nor stride towards any degrees except the geographical.

The unfortunate victim, whose feelings were really to be pitied, actually writhed in soul, under the infliction. As he dearly loved his father, he could not witness the gloom which overcast his fine

jovial countenance without an exquisite pang of self-reproach; and bitterly he execrated the folly that had given his cousin the opportunity of such a triumph.

"The hell-hound!" he said to himself, "he might as well have put the letter into my father's hands, before all present; but cunning as he is in running on his foil, and doubling, he shall find I can pick it out."

In the mean time his feelings were somewhat soothed by receiving, under the table, the secret pressure of a kindly hand, which he knew to be Raby's, who took this method of showing that he appreciated and sympathized with his situation. It was the act of a friend in need, and Ringwood acknowledged its value at that moment by a grip so strenuous, that the blood rushed up into Raby's cheeks, who with difficulty suppressed an exclamation. The two brothers had indeed, in some degree, forgotten their own differences, and were united more than formerly as mutual allies against St. Kitts, whom by some vague, indefinable instinct, they had begun to regard in the light of a common enemy.

"Here's good luck to the new nag," said Squire Ned, with a nod to Ringwood, preparatory to a long pull and a strong pull at a tankard of xx ale, for which the Green Dragon was justly famous. "A roarer eh?—sounder in wind than I am!—can't drink a pint without fetching breath." "And here's to you, boy, yourself," he added, with a renewed draught in honour of Ringwood:—"nothing but a good fellow—upright and downright—no skulker—no flincher—no snake in the grass!"

With the last of his negatives, the Squire threw such a significant meaning into his one grey eye, and fixed it so pointedly on the Creole, that the latter immediately perceived that one of the party, at least, had detected the latent origin of his insidious panegyrics. Unlike the Baronet, who set great store by an University education—honest Ned attached no earthly value to human learning, beyond reading and writing; and therefore he had listened to the praises of Ringwood as a sportsman, with an unalloyed rapture, only equalled in degree by the utter apathy with which he had

heard the encomiums on Raby's classical attainments. It was not till he noticed Sir Mark's depression, that he suspected the sting which, like Cleopatra's asp, had been treacherously introduced, under a covering of fruit and flowers. His unbounded love and admiration of Ringwood led him naturally to the conclusion, that jealousy, and a desire of supplanting him, were the private motives of the West Indian; or, as he forcibly illustrated it by a mental comparison, Sir Mark had a young cuckoo in his nest, that would eject his own brood. The abrupt trial of the new nag, and the narrow escape of St. Kitts, were no longer a mystery; and could human eye have searched the Squire's inward heart, it would probably have detected a lurking wish, that the horse had tried the temper of his shoes on the skull and brains which had conceived such a device against "the Heir and Hope of the Hall."

Under these circumstances, each person of the party having some particular cause of discontent with another, it may easily be conceived, that the general hilarity fell far short of the Baronet's

anticipations. On leaving the inn, Ringwood indeed could not help mechanically admiring the high spirit and fine action of the beautiful animal that was led towards him; and for a moment, he looked like Shakspeare's Young Harry, as if about to "witch the world with noble horsemanship;" but this elasticity of body and spirit vanished as he alighted in the saddle, and the Creole, like anybody's Old Harry, smiled a sardonic smile, to witness the rankling of the well-directed shaft. The Squire was infected by his favourite's gloom;—Sir Mark had a grievance of his own; and even the serene mind of Raby was darkened by the shadows of clouds which hung over other heads.

For some miles the whole company rode almost in silence; at last, an abrupt question from the Baronet revived the old feud.

"Ringwood,—what name do you think of giving to your new nag,—for luckily, Old Sparks hadn't christened him with any of his ridiculous rumfoozles, or rumptyiddities?"

"As the Squire names all his horses and dogs to begin with A," replied Ringwood, "I make a

rule that all mine shall start with B. I think of calling him Brown Bastard."

The last two words, and the look, which put them as it were *in italics*, were not lost on the Creole. His eyes literally flashed fire, and as he turned his horse towards Ringwood's, his hand made an involuntary movement upward with his riding-whip, but luckily the motion was too slight to excite notice.

"Bastard again," he muttered between his teeth, "do you wish to excite me to show, Sir, how I can resent an insult?"

"Name your own horses as you please, Sir," returned Ringwood, in the same under-tone,—his hand mechanically gliding from the butt-end to the top of his whip, "and do not dare to interfere with mine."

"Bastard eh?—proper name enough for a colt," said the Squire, unceremoniously thrusting his hack between the enraged cousins. "Don't suppose Jiggumbob and Tolderol were ever married,—banns or license!"

"This is my quarrel, Sir, and I will not brook

meddling," said St. Kitts to the Squire, with the same guarded tone; but in spite of this caution, and the prudent manœuvres of Raby, who endeavoured to divert the attention of his father, the Baronet's quick ears had already apprised him that there was a quarrel on foot, though he had not discovered its drift.

He immediately pushed on a little a-head, where he wheeled his horse round, and halting in the middle of the road, with a position and manner of great dignity, he addressed them as they came up three abreast.

"How is this, lads?—how is this?—snarling and wrangling between whelps of the same blood,—I had almost said the same litter? Is this your respect for yourselves, for each other, for me? Do you want to hunt these grey hairs," (here he took off his hat,) "to earth, with shame and sorrow?"

"Hark to him! hark!" shouted Ned, at the same time doffing his own hat in sign of reverence; "hark to the old one!"

"Thank ye, Squire, for the halloo!" said the

Baronet, "and be so kind as to lead the field at a foot-pace towards the Hall, whilst Raby remains with me."

In obedience to this command, they all passed on except the younger son, who reined up beside his father; and as soon as the others were out of sight, Sir Mark commenced his examination.

"Raby, you know I hate babbling. Put me up at once to the origin of this fall-out between your brother and St. Kitts, for I winded a quarrel better than a hundred yards back."

"I believe, Sir," answered Raby, "it may all be traced to a letter which my cousin has at this moment in his pocket. It is from Jenkins, the tutor, to yourself; and as Jenkins is a pedant, and Ringwood is naturally the reverse, I declined to be the bearer of an epistle which probably reflected on my brother. Ringwood refused the letter from the same suspicion, and I believe he feels hurt that St. Kitts undertook to deliver it."

"A likely cast, Raby," said the Baronet, "and my own observation owns to the scent.—Ride up, man, ride up, and I will soon see if it holds good."

In a few minutes they rejoined the others, and Sir Mark rode up to the Creole and asked for the letter.

"I have had a severe struggle, Sir," said the latter, between friendship and conscience, whether to suppress or deliver this unlucky paper, guessing the contents to be unpleasant to Ringwood, and I believe friendship would have got the better, —but Raby's mention of it leaves me no alternative." So saying he delivered the letter to the Baronet, who thrust it unopened into his pocket.

"You hear that, Ringwood," he said, addressing his eldest son.—"Your cousin intended to hush it up. Take to kindness, and shake hands, boys, shake hands at once.—You must pack better together, or it will break my heart. I fancied I could cover you all with a sheet."

"For my own part," said St. Kitts, "I am perfectly ready to forgive and forget any personal cause of offence,—and which possibly originated in my own misapprehension. Will my cousin not say the same, now I have spared him the humiliation of making the first advances?"

But Ringwood remained silent. The Squire, however, again rode in between and endeavoured to join their hands, almost pulling the West Indian from his saddle in the attempt.

"Still mute!" exclaimed the Baronet, rising in wrath. "Don't forget, Ringwood—my temper is spicy—and if I once get in a passion—Zounds, Sir, shake hands at once, or I will dismount you, I will by Jove!"

"At your command, Sir, I must," answered Ringwood, reluctantly extending his hand towards his cousin, while a sudden rush of blood to his face showed that a slight smile of triumph in the Creole, had not escaped his notice. "It is your turn to-day," he muttered, "it will be mine to-morrow."

"That's well, boys," said Sir Mark, his face beaming with pleasure at what he deemed the reconciliation. "As for this," he said, taking out the letter, and casting it over the little bridge they were crossing, "the minnows may read it, for me. What is past is past, and I will not run the heel. So if any one here has neglected his duty, let him go on Sunday to church and hark to Dr. Cobb,

and when it comes to 'We have left undone those things we ought to have done, and we have done those things we ought not to have done,' and so forth, let him say Amen, with all his heart, and resolve to take up and mend for the future."

The lecture had its due effect on the party for whose benefit it was intended: for Ringwood, naturally well-disposed but thoughtless, from the very first moment that he witnessed the disappointment and vexation of his father, had been framing resolutions to apply himself more diligently to his College studies. He could not forget, however, that the wound in his parent's feelings had been wantonly irritated and probed by the Creole; whom he regarded therefore with unmitigated hostility. The latter, on the contrary, assumed a cheerful air, and affected to be overjoyed at the adjustment of their difference.

"St. Kitts," said the Baronet, "you are a generous fellow. You do not sit frowning on your horse as sulky as a badger, or bristle up and keep yourself to yourself like a hedge-hog."

"He can play the hypocrite better than I can,"

Ringwood was about to answer; but he suppressed the speech, and contented himself with slacking his pace and letting his horse trot alongside his brother's.

"Thank ye for nothing, Raby," he said so low as not to be overheard. "You had an opportunity just now of backing me with my father; and see what comes of it—Gip has the call."

"Indeed, you wrong me," replied Raby, "I said merely that old Jenkins was a pedant and that you were none,—and that St. Kitts had undertaken to deliver his letter, after you and I had declined."

"Out of infernal malice," said Ringwood, "and to injure me with my father—you might have pitched in that. When I want a friend, give me an out-and-outer! Such a friend as I have been to you. Didn't I back you at seven to four for the prize poem—and never hedged?"

"But, my dear Ringwood———"

"Who told you how to lay your money at the running-match at Bullington? Who put you up to the trick at the trotting-match that Scamp was meant to win, and Fairplay was *not?* Who told

you of the snug little prize-fight at Headington? Who took you to Mother Boult's?"

"My dear Ringwood, I could retort. Who rendered into Latin for you the twentieth Spectator? Who paid your tavern-bill at Pinkie's? Who stood your friend with the Proctor in the affair of Widow Wakeman? But this is child's play. Your own temper is in fault. I warned you not to let your quarrel break out before your father?"

"I know you did," said Ringwood, rather softened, "and if I had taken your advice, and hadn't let loose, I should be now in a better place. But I cannot stand nibbling at a hind-leg; I must go at the head at once. I can't help it —it's in my nature: and I hate St. Kitts as Whop hates vermin."

"There again," said Raby, "you are always in extremes. Is it not possible to dislike St. Kitts without hating him, and wanting to nail him up amongst the vermin on the end of the old barn?"

"Faith! he would not cut a bad figure among

the polecats, and stoats, and weazels," said Ringwood, smiling bitterly at the conceit. "He can run you down, bite viciously, and hang on at your nape, as well as any of 'em! He would be a jewel of a specimen to rot and stink among the skeletons of Dick's museum!"

Their conversation was here interrupted by the halt of the advance; and Sir Mark, riding back to his two sons, desired them to take especial care of the brown woman who was coming along the road, for that Mr. Twigg said she was a witch, and even Justice Rivers was quite at fault about her. As she walked towards them slowly, they had leisure to remark her appearance. She was dressed in faded mourning, rather brown than black, through length of wear or exposure to weather; the weeds of a decayed widow, one of those sable beings that seem, like the ravens, to depend on a special Providence for their sustenance, they have apparently so little earthly means of their own. Her dress, however, though coarse and ill-made, could not conceal the symmetry of a shape that had belonged to that "or-

der of fine forms" which is peculiar to the half-caste females of the West Indies. She had the taper waist, the full round limbs, and the graceful easy carriage. Moreover she had the abundant black hair, curling naturally into ringlets, too inflexible to uncoil themselves at every breath of heat or moisture; and her eyes were of as dark a hue, black and bright as cannel-coal, and equally apt to emit fire and flame.

As soon as she came near enough, the Squire, who rode a little a-head, jumped off his horse, and planted himself before her, holding out what remained of his right hand.

"Here," he said, "sixpen'north of fortune-telling. Won't bilk you—cross with silver and all that!"

"The wise man makes his own fortune," said the woman with great dignity, "and he himself best knows its aspect."

"High-ropes, eh?" said the 'Squire somewhat abashed by this rebuff. "Won't look at my palm —suppose the two off-fingers make a difference. No matter—welcome to the tizzy."

"Give it to your slaves," exclaimed the woman, with an imperious wave of the arm and a look of scorn that implied as much contempt for his silver as for Twigg's copper.

"Egad, boys," said Sir Mark, "I begin to think the Justice is right, and that she comes of good blood.—She reminds me wonderfully of Mrs. What's-her-Name, in the character of Cleopatra. I'll warrant her father was at the very least the King of the Gipsies!"

"There is no more Gipsy-blood in my veins, than in that young gentleman's," returned the woman, pointing her finger at the Creole; and gazing so earnestly on his face, that for some minutes she seemed unconscious of any other presence. Her mind evidently turned inward, and she had the abstracted look of a person revolving the past or the future with intense interest. At last she spoke. "Although no gipsy, I have some skill in augury, and if you will favour me, young gentleman, with your hand"——

"Try her, St. Kitts, try her," exclaimed Sir

Mark, "now we have found her, let us give a good account of her; let her open, man, and we shall soon see if she gives tongue to the right tune." Here he drew St. Kitts aside, adding, in a lower tone, "let her cross your hand with a crown though, for she is not one of the common sort."

In obedience to this direction, St. Kitts gave her a crown, which she immediately transferred to the huntsman, with the air of one accustomed to bestow such largess; making Dick stare with as much amazement, as if he had seen with his own eyes a hare turning into a witch. He lifted his hand as if to touch his hat, but checked his arm midway,—and then sat twirling the coin between his finger and thumb, with a ludicrous look of appeal towards his master; partly in doubt whether he ought to accept it from a distressed gentlewoman, and partly in fear that the money was from the Devil's mint, and would burn a hole in his pocket.

"Pouch it, Dick; pouch it!" said Sir Mark, in an aside. "If you don't fancy her herself, you can

drink it to the health of the Lancashire Witches, or any others you like."

Accordingly Dick pocketed the piece, whilst St. Kitts extended his hand to the fortune-teller, who grasped it between her own, and even kissed it, muttering inaudibly, and at the same time trembling so that it was visible to the eye, as if feeling, or affecting to feel, the prophetical agitations of the ancient sybils.

"There is a black cloud," she said, "over your star,—but there is a bright sun in store. Remember me. The past you do not remember—the present you do not understand—the future you cannot foresee. But I know it all. Remember me. You have but one present trouble; and it concerns a gold ring for a lady's finger."

"Hark to Gipsy!" shouted the Baronet; "the old story, by Jove! To her! St. Kitts!—to her, —to her again! What odds she don't name the lady?"

"I hope, Sir," said St. Kitts, "you are already satisfied of her abilities as a Pythoness. So far from thinking of marriage, I give you my honour

I am not even an hour gone in courtship. But she is like all her tribe; a gold ring and a bride-cake are their staple commodities."

"Not so fast, young man," said the fortune-teller. "There are two ends to a knot, and two interpretations to an oracle. Remember me. Some lovers may long to see the third finger of their lady's left hand in a golden circle,—and some sons may wish that their mothers had worn the same emblem. Remember me!"

"The devil remember you!" said the Creole, who almost imagined that the evil one had thrown this augury in his path,—and striking the spurs into his steed, he gallopped some hundred yards a-head, as if to escape the comments of his companions. The woman silently followed his course with her eyes, till he disappeared behind a turn of the road, and then, without deigning to notice any of the questions that were put to her, resumed her walk in the opposite direction.

"Egad it looks like witchcraft though!" exclaimed the Baronet: "she knew where to have him,—and bolted him like a rabbit! Not that

I'm fond of ferreting into futurity: it damps a man's courage, to see his dangers and misfortunes so long beforehand; and is apt to make him boggle and stick in the middle, when a gallant charge would have carried him through."

"It was nothing but chance, father," said Raby. "What Shakspeare calls a random bolt. I have often had my own fortune told,—for the Gipsies are an interesting race, and what I had read of them excited my curiosity to know more of them. These fortune-tellers are excellent physiognomists,—you saw how narrowly she watched the looks of St. Kitts—for they know in an instant, by your face, when they have touched on the right string. Then again they are very voluble, and have always some recurring phrase, like that 'Remember me,' which gives them time for invention. Besides it is a very common thing for them———"

"D——d if I won't," ejaculated the Squire, rousing suddenly from a fit of meditation—— "knows, may be, who's to win the Darby!"

In compliance with this suggestion he imme-

diately turned his horse round and rode after the Sybil, determined to ask her a few questions for the benefit of his betting-book, while the rest of the party pulled up and waited to see the issue of the conference. The woman had gained the brow of a gentle hill before she was overtaken, and as she stood in relief against the sky they could see every motion. By the action of her hands and arms it was evident that she was talking with great vehemence, and the Squire, who had dismounted, by his gestures was equally importunate, till at last as she turned to go, they saw him catch hold of her cloak, as if to detain her by force. Her right arm immediately rose at full stretch above her head, and a flash came from the hand in the sun-shine like the glancing of steel. The blow however did not descend: the garment was released, the woman disappeared instantly behind the brow of the hill;—and the Squire, remounting his horse, came slowly back to rejoin his companions.

"There you come Squire," cried Sir Mark, "with your head drooping and your tail down, like a greyhound that has lost his hare!"

"Confound her," said Ned, with a smart slap of his riding-whip on his boot.—"Wants a cage and a keeper—worse than ten tiger-cats or cat-a-mountains — looks scratches, and talks bites. Never met an uglier customer—never—never—never!"

"We thought we saw the gleam of a knife," remarked Ringwood.

"Ay, boy," said the Squire,—"long blade—sharp point—fit to kill a porker. Did its share of work, may be, at Hazel Bridge—no saying. A regular vicious jade—would turn a man to clod and sticking, in the snap of a flint!"

"You should have tried her with gold," said Raby; "these gipsies well know how to raise their market. They reject copper in the hope of silver; and refuse silver in expectation of gold."

"Had gold on the hook, man," replied the Squire, "but no go.—Wouldn't rise at a guinea. Very odd, — won't take money, — don't patter slang,—long knife,—and no fork to it!"

"I am afraid," said the Baronet, with a serious shake of his head, "she has learned the trick of

stabbing in the county jail. The Justice sent her there for a month to beat hemp."

"Some day, hemp will beat *her*," said Ned, with a knowing nod and wink.

"I cannot say that I like that hemp-beating," said Sir Mark; "it only teaches them how to hammer people's heads. I remember once looking in at them at work, and a hang-dog set they were, and one rogue in particular. There, said he at every thump of his mallet, that's for So-and-so's rascally old brains. And so he went on with a bang a-piece for the whole Bench. But Magistrates are as fond of their prisons as Fox-hunters of their kennels; only they can never have their pack numerous enough of all sorts and sizes, whereas a master of hounds likes 'em well-bred and select."

"Good," said the Squire.

"Besides," continued the Baronet, "the dogs get a good education, and learn how to behave and make themselves useful when they are let out; which is far from the case with human prisoners."

"True as Gospel," said Ned.

"It is quite an idea of my own," Sir Mark went

on, "but it would be better for the nation if the visiting magistrates would visit a well-managed kennel, by way of example, before they inspect their jails."

"Ay," said the Squire—"regular meals—nothing but water—no riot—no giving tongue, that is, cursing and swearing—long whip—plenty of work—tree and a halter for them that won't mend."

"The Justice laughs at my notion," said the Baronet, "but between ourselves, if any thing should happen to disable Dick, and a vacancy occurs, I'll try my interest in the county to get him made Master of the House of Correction."

They now overtook the Creole, who had recovered his composure, and had sobered his pace to a walk, in order to allow the others to come up. As they advanced, he purposely drew towards the side of the road which would place him next to Ringwood, in order to maintain the credit he had obtained for generosity and forbearance.

"I am afraid I have appeared very foolish," he said, "but there are certain subjects which have a peculiar sting."

"A sting indeed," said Sir Mark. "I never saw such a start off but once, and that was on Sorrel, when the boys had been stirring up the old wasp's nest in the lane. I verily believe he went through all the capers of the College Hornpipe. But spur on, boys, spur on, I see the Twiggs' carriage yonder turning off for the Hall."

The Ex-Sheriff's equipage was indeed entering the avenue, but at a very unusual pace; for the coachman had flogged his horses into a gallop, a sure sign, in the Baronet's opinion, that the lady was not of the party. Having the advantage of a good start, the vehicle arrived at its destination some ten minutes before the horsemen; but to the surprise of Sir Mark, he saw from afar the two ladies run up the steps, and dart into the house like a couple of scared rabbits bobbing into a burrow. Suspecting some unusual occurrence, he pushed on at speed, and on entering the Hall the first person he encountered was old Deborah, panting along with a glass of cold water, her breath just sufficing to inform her master that "Mrs. Twigg—was in—a—fit!"

Fits by the way are strange things. Like the hen bird which has the faculty of retaining her egg till an appropriate nest is built and ready for its reception, so a lady seems to have the power of bottling up her hysterics till there is help at hand, with a chance of hartshorn and water, and every fitting accompaniment. As Major Oakley says, in the Jealous Wife, "Did you ever hear of her falling into a fit when you were not by? Was she ever found in convulsions in her closet?"

Accordingly Mrs. Twigg had postponed her swoon while in the carriage, or on the steps, or the stairs, but the moment she found herself in the drawing-room, with a comfortable elbow-chair under her, she quietly closed her eyes, dropped her arms, and "went off like a lamb."

CHAPTER XIX.

"Death and destruction! Are all the horrors of air, fire, and water, to be levell'd only at me? Am I only to be singled out for gunpowder-plots, combustibles and conflagration? Here it is—an incendiary letter dropped at my door.

* * * * *

I'm so frightened I scarce know whether I sit, stand, or go. Perhaps this moment I'm treading on lighted matches, blazing brimstone, and barrels of gunpowder. They are preparing to blow me up into the clouds. Murder! We shall all be burnt in our beds! We shall all be burnt in our beds!"

CROAKER.

"I have met with so many axidents, surprisals, and terrifications, that I am in a perfect fantigo, and believe I shall never be my own self again."

WIN. JENKINS.

JUST as the Baronet entered the drawing-room, Mrs. Twigg began to give signs of returning animation. Her snub nose, almost excoriated by smelling-salts, worked with convulsive twitchings;

and as her daughter fanned her, she gave at every puff of air a gasp like a gudgeon; at last she opened her eyes, and sat staring about her like the Lady in Comus, in the Enchanted Chair.

"Upon my honour, Sir Mark," said Twigg, "I am really ashamed of this rumpus. It's so ridiculous having these family things in a strange house. Curse it, Madam, if you must faint, I wish you'd contrive to do it at home!"

"Really Pa', you're rather unfeeling," lisped Miss Twigg. "When insensibility affects the nerves, we can't always faint where we like."

"That's all gammon," said Twigg, in the very spirit of Major Oakley. "You take precious good care never to flop down in a kennel; and catch you swooning away into a fish pond, or having a kicking fit in the fender. But, says you, that would spoil one's clothes."

"It was the cruel galloping," whined the lady, her senses returning, as well as every thing else, except her colour, which had never flown.

"And high time to gallop, Madam," answered Twigg, "when people have a volcano under their

feet! Things are come to a crisis. Sir Mark Tyrrel, Baronet!—Mrs. Hamilton, Madam—we live in very awful times, very awful indeed!"

"My dear fellow hold hard," said the Baronet, laying his hand on Twigg's arm, and whispering into his ear, "You will have her into fits again if you don't hold hard, for she's amiss and out of heart."

"Let her faint," said Twigg, elevating his voice to the proper pitch for a forum. "The hour is come when people must not think of females and fits. The very thing my old friend Jack Dawe said in the Common Council is coming to pass. A rise-up of servants against masters, and servants against mistresses—of people with nothing, against people of property. There's been a dead set at us ever since we came to Hollington."

"To be sure," said Sir Mark gravely, "I'm afraid some of our democrats and demagogues, with their speeches and so forth, have done us no good in our public principles. There is a set of people in the parish I know, that are all for liberty and equality."

"Read this, Sir Mark," exclaimed Twigg, drawing a letter out of his pocket. "If any body wants conviction let them read this, and lay their hands on their hearts, and then say ar'n't these revolutionary levelling times, or ar'n't they not? Let them just read this," he continued, striking the letter with his fore-finger, but still holding the paper so that its perusal should not interrupt his oration, "Here's proof, ocular proof! The reign of anarchy, and the reign of terror, and all sorts of reigns, is set in; and social order, and all that sort of thing, is to be upset, and subverted, and topsy-turvied. Here am I—threatened with fire, and fury, and brimstone. And why? I ask why?—Why, says you, because I'm a man of property!"

"Very shocking times, indeed," said Sir Mark, ineffectually holding out his hand for the letter.

"It's true, Sir Mark Tyrrel, Baronet, every word and syllable of it," said Mrs. Twigg, with a shake of the head, very like Lord Burleigh's in the Critic.

"What's to become of Church and State?" continued Twigg, evidently fancying himself on his legs before the Common Council. "What's to be-

come of the Bible and Crown? What's to become of us all, when the pillars of the constitution is pulled down, and the pinnacles of national prosperity, and all that is ancient, all that is old, and all that is venerable, is trod under foot by tag-rag-and-bobtail?"

"If the paper contains any such plot," said Sir Mark, again attempting to take it, "I should say it ought to be forwarded to the Secretary of State."

"That's what I say," said Mrs. Twigg. "Nothing but a troop of Life Guards can keep us safe in our shoes. I am glad we came here for advice."

"All I ask," continued Twigg, "is one question, and that is this.—How are people of property to act, when thus attacked in retail,—I mean to say detail? Here am I—worth we'll say, a hundred thousand pounds,—here I am, and unless I come down fifty pounds to a nameless anonymous assassin, I'm told to look to my stables, for the scoundrels have made matches, and bought brimstone, and they'll have blood, blood, blood!"

"If that is expressed in the writing," said Sir Mark, "it is a regular threatening letter,"—here

he made a fresh motion for it,—"and our friend the Justice would know how to deal with the author according to law."

"Every word of it is there," said Mrs. Twigg, "the three bloods and all. I've read it over and over, till I have almost got it by heart. I'm sure I wish a whitlow on every finger that had a hand in it. They have put Mr. T. in such a twitter that"—

"Hold your confounded fool's tongue, Madam," exclaimed Twigg. "Nobody was in a twitter but yourself. But here it is, sir Mark—read it and judge, or maybe you had better read it aloud for the benefit of Mrs. Hamilton. If it don't smell like a house a-fire, my name's not Twigg!"

Thus appealed to, the Baronet took the incendiary epistle, and began in a very audible and solemn voice to read as follows:—the Twiggs severally making faces and gestures of horror as they conceived themselves to be alluded to personally in the denunciations.

"Sur,

"Wen this cums to hand you will soon sea Revenge. Hell-fire Dick nose what

to doo. I have bought Brimstun for yew. Mersey his not to be had. Their ar lots of Matchis maid I can tell yew fury & Ruin Bloodsucker & Blazes dam Mister Burril as bean dun brown & mind yew dont git the saim send me fifty yeller boys and I will make yew safe yew dont no wat yew ar standin on yew may hav havvock or not as yew like but yew had better cum down. Look sharp to yure stabil & mind my wurds bloods the thing blood Blood Blood.

"Yure's to command,

"J. P."

"P.S. That yung Puppy of yures deserves hangin and soe does Madam. I wunder yew can keep sich a Bitch. Has for Matilda we ar goin to cut her throte & bile her."

"There," exclaimed Twigg, at the conclusion of the letter, "there's no mistake in that!"

"Did you ever hear, Sir Mark Tyrrel, Baronet," asked Mrs. Twigg, "such horrid bloodthirsty language, and scandalous vipertuperations? About myself I can't repeat, but as regards

poor 'Tilda, what can she have done that she's to swelter in her gore?"

"Upon my honour, Madam," replied the Baronet, "if it's no offence to say so, you're all flourishing without any occasion!"

"Sir Mark Tyrrel, Baronet," said the lady, "you astonish me. All flourishing! I wish we was!"

"My dear madam," said Sir Mark, "the case is this. You receive a letter, a regular puzzler, and it makes you all throw up ——"

"Indeed, I confess, for one," said the lady, "that it gave me a kind of a turn."

"Well, then," continued the figurative Fox-hunter, "after spreading this way and that, at last there is a challenge ——"

"I never thought of that," exclaimed Twigg, "but of course Sir Mark Tyrrel, Baronet, you know more of challenges than I do. A man that has had to be his own shopman, couldn't be expected to go out if he was called out. Of course it's some Irish Dragoon officer, for I never read any thing in such a blunderbuss style in my life.

It's very odd though, says you, considering I haven't been a gentleman long enough to offend any body."

"My good Sir," said the Baronet, "you are quite at fault."

"Well, well," said Twigg, submissively, "if you say so, I'll apologize, let him be who he will, and that's saying a good deal for a man of my property."

"Zounds, man," exclaimed Sir Mark, "you're more bewildered than an owl in daylight! You couldn't be more stupified and abroad, if all the cock-sparrows of the parish were mobbing about your ears. There isn't a word about fighting in it, sword or pistol!"

"The Lord be praised!" ejaculated Mrs. Twigg. "Mr. T. was never concerned in any honourable affair in his life; and so little used as he is to duelling, and letting off things, if no worse happened, he'd be sure to shoot away his own fingers or something."

"It's a pity Pa' don't learn," said Miss Twigg, "as shooting is so genteel. Every gentleman at

Hollington goes out with his gun; and really it looks a great deal more becoming for a man of fortune, than a great green umbrella."

"That's what I say," added Mrs. Twigg; "every blessed day. To be sure it's late in life for Mr. T. to learn shooting—I wish he had belonged to the volunteers!"

"Volunteers be hanged!" said Twigg. "What could one volunteer do at a house a-fire? He couldn't surround the property could he?"

"You mean to say then, Sir, that the Hive is to be burnt down and gutted?" enquired Mrs. Twigg, with a rueful look at the Baronet.

"My dear Madam," said Sir Mark, "I mean to say, you're quite at fault about the letter. There is not a word in it, except about dogs and horses. I have Havoc and Revenge, and fifty such names, in my own kennel—ask Kate there!"

"I have the pleasure of saying, Madam," said Mrs. Hamilton, "that I have seen many similar letters from Richard, the huntsman, to my brother."

"To be sure she has," said the Baronet. "But here comes the Squire,—he will pick it out in a moment."

In fact, having allowed a certain time on his watch for the fit to be done in, honest Ned at this juncture entered the room, accompanied by Ringwood, Raby, and the Creole, who were severally introduced, and Mrs. Hamilton saluted her nephews with great affection. The inquest on the letter was then resumed.

"Here, Squire," said the Baronet, "read this letter, and oblige us with a key to its meaning. Twigg here sniffs fire and brimstone, and swears the Hive is going to be treated like a wasp's nest."

"Old Jack Pike, eh?—know his scrawl," said the Squire, as he glanced at the hand-writing; but he had no sooner got through the first sentence, than he began to slap his pocket,—"know it, eh?—to be sure I do,—about Revenge and Havoc, and the matches."

"Yes, and blood, blood, blood," said Mrs. Twigg, speaking hastily, "and fury and ruin, and cutting throats, and burning, and doing us brown. You think as we do, Sir. It was dropt this very morning, Sir, dropped at our own door!"

"Like enough, Ma'am," said Ned,—"dropped it myself,—called at the Hive this morning,—asked

by young Twigg to look at a puppy,—can show you the cover,—E. Somerville, Esq., and all that,——dated a month ago."

"Then it has nothing to do with murder, and arson, and extorting money?" enquired Twigg.

"Devil a word," answered the Squire, "all about long dogs and tits. Honest fellow, old Jack,—wanted me to come down to a coursing meeting."

"Thank God!" exclaimed Mrs. Twigg, solemnly, —"here's a load off all our minds and spirits!"

"Oh it's like a calm after a storm at Margate," said Miss Matilda.

"To be sure it would have been a thousand pities," said Mrs. Twigg. "You must know, Mrs. Hamilton, we have been plotting and planning the most delightful feat shampeter,—but, after the letter, Mr. T. said it must all be given up,—or at all events done in-doors."

"I know I did," said Twigg, "and so would any one that stood in my shoes, as a man of property, and the bull's-eye of the whole plot. It's all very pleasant, for some people to be horn-piping on lawns,—or eating tarts under a tent,—

or drinking syllabubs in summer-houses; but it isn't quite so pleasant, for a man that has toiled all his life, to be killed on his own freehold grounds, before he had time to enjoy his affluence. May be shot at, says you, from behind a tree, or stabbed by a ruffian out of a bush, like G. Barnwell, Esquire, of Camberwell Grove."

The conversation now became general; and after the lapse of about an hour, The Humble Bee returned with his family to the Hive: a little dissatisfied, indeed, with their own sagacity and penetration; but infinitely delighted to find that they might hold their Bartlemy Fair on the lawn, without reckoning on a *Swing*.

END OF VOL. I.

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